Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-174
Monday
9 September 1991

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-174 9 September 1991

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An • indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

GCC, Iranian Ministers To View Gulf Security *[AFP]* 1
Iraqi Delegate to Arab League Reviews Bubiyan *[MENA]* 1
Iraqi Delegate Speaks at Economic, Social Council *[INA]* 1
Libyan Officials Arrive for 10 Sep League Session *[MENA]* 2

Palestinian Affairs

Bush Stance on Israeli Loans Welcomed *[AFP]* 2
Baker Visit Not Welcome If Policy Unchanged *[AL-SHA'B 5 Sep]* 2
PNC Executive Committee Meets for Preparations 3
Factional Differences Cause Delay *[APS]* 3
Intifadah, PNC Session Discussed *[Sanaa VOP]* 3
Baltics Situation Reviewed *[Algiers VOP]* 3
'Palestinian Sources' Say PNC To Meet 23 Sep *[MENA]* 4
Ambassador to Jordan on Date *[Algiers Radio]* 4
Further on Comments *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 8 Sep]* 4
U.S. Guarantees Demanded by PLO Listed *[London AL-HAYAH 4 Sep]* 5
Hamas Meets 'Arafat, Rejects 'U.S.' Settlement *[MENA]* 6
PNSF Chairman Reiterates National Dialogue *[Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio]* 6
'Arafat Meets With Mandela, Zimbabwe's Mugabe *[Algiers VOP]* 6
Israeli Force Storms 'Old' AL-FAJR Offices *[AL-SHA'B 5 Sep]* 7

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Bendjedid Receives Velayati, Rafsanjani Message *[IRNA]* 8
Envoy Conveys al-Qadhdhafi Message to Bendjedid *[Algiers Radio]* 8
FLN Political Bureau Issues Statement *[Algiers TV]* 8
Situation 'Critical,' Bread in Short Supply *[Tunis Radio]* 8
Wheat Stockpiles Meet Algeria's Needs for 1991 *[APS]* 8

Egypt

Provisions of U.S.-Kuwaiti Agreement Reported *[AL-SHA'B 3 Sep]* 9
Cairo Welcomes Bush's Stand on Israeli Loans *[Cairo Radio]* 9
Fatah Envoy on Bush's Policy *[MENA]* 9
Paper Praises Bush *[MENA]* 9
Paper Views Secretary Baker's Upcoming Tour *[MENA]* 9
Ghali Views Coming Tour, USSR Republics *[Cairo Radio]* 10
Preparations Completed for Resettlements in Libya *[MENA]* 10
Sandstone Exports to Israel Called 'Conspiracy' *[AL-SHA'B 3 Sep]* 10
Clash Between Police, Villagers Reported *[AL-AHRAM 3 Sep]* 11

Sudan

Khartoum Gives Permission for Relief Flights *[AFP]* 11
Red Cross Plane Destroyed by Landmine *[Bern Radio]* 11
Government Protests French Minister's Statements *[SUNA]* 11
Khalifah Asks SPLA To Present Program *[Omdurman Radio]* 12

Garang Confirms Control, Denies Rights Abuses *[AFP]* 12
Arab, Foreign Support for Failed Coup Alleged *[AL-SHA'B 27 Aug]* 13

IRAQ

Ramadan Welcomes Ties With Egypt, Saudis, U.S. *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 14
Saddam Receives Finance Minister on Pay Hikes *[Baghdad Radio]* 14
Minister on Pay, Benefit Hikes *[Baghdad Radio]* 14
Saddam Visits Culture, Information Ministry *[INA]* 14
Oil Official on Export Capacity, Repair Work *[INA]* 14
Banker—'Foreign Parties' Behind Counterfeiting *[INA]* 15
RCC Measure on Property Grants to Military *[Baghdad Radio]* 15
Hammadi Says Israel Will Get U.S. Guarantees *[INA]* 15
Inspection Leader Cites 'Lack of Certain Things' *[MENA]* 16
'Something' Discovered *[AFP]* 16
Kurdish Source Says Baghdad Talks at 'Dead End' *[AFP]* 17
Karkuk Residents Allowed To Return *[Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan]* 17
Attacks on Areas in Kurdistan Reported *[Voice of the People of Kurdistan]* 17

ISRAEL

Details of Request for Loan Guarantees Reported *[Jerusalem TV]* 18
Shamir Foresees No Major Clash With U.S. *[Jerusalem Radio]* 18
Rejects Linking Guarantees, Peace *[Jerusalem Radio]* 18
Issue Might Affect Peace Process *[Jerusalem TV]* 19
Aide Rejects Bush's Call To Defer Guarantees *[Jerusalem Radio]* 20
Political Level 'Does Not Reject' Interim Aid *[Jerusalem TV]* 20
Moda'i Confident of Loan Guarantees *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 20
Bank Head—Backing Needed as Sign of Confidence *[Jerusalem TV]* 21
On Impact of Delay in Guarantees *[Jerusalem Radio]* 22
Further Reactions to Bush Moves on Guarantees *[THE JERUSALEM POST, etc.]* 22
Shamir on Peace Process, Settlements *[MA'ARIV 8 Sep]* 23
Levi Promises Continued Cooperation in Process *[Jerusalem Radio]* 24
Arens on Security, U.S. Relations *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 24
HA'ARETZ on State of Relations With U.S. *[6 Sep]* 26
Ehud Gol Replaces Pazner as Shamir's Media Aide *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 8 Sep]* 27
Poll Shows Right Wing Boosts Electoral Strength *[HADASHOT 6 Sep]* 27
Analysts Examine Implications of Gulf War *[GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE]* 27
15 Israelis Meet PLO Officials in Vienna *[Jerusalem TV]* 28

JORDAN

Government Praises U.S. Policy on Israeli Loans *[Amman Radio]* 29
'Step in Right Direction' *[JORDAN TIMES 7 Sep]* 29
King Husayn: 242 Means Total Israeli Withdrawal *[Amman Radio]* 29
'Frontline' States To Discuss Coordination *[AL-RA'Y 7 Sep]* 30
No Counter to Egypt's Visa Requirement Planned *[AL-RA'Y 8 Sep]* 30
Returnees From Kuwait Total 21,506 in One Month *[Amman Radio]* 30
Could Affect Peace Process *[JORDAN TIMES 7 Sep]* 30

LEBANON

Iranian Charge Urges Release of Muslim Hostages *[IRNA]* 33
Israeli Pilot Held by Lebanese, Not Iranians *[Beirut Radio]* 33
PKK Denies Kidnapping Westerners in Kurdistan *[AFP]* 33
Lahd Militia Reportedly Threatens Bra'shit *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 33

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Statement Issued Recognizing Baltic States *[Kabul Radio]* 34
USSR Supreme Soviet Delegation Visits Kabul *[Kabul Radio]* 34

Bangladesh

Government Recognizes 3 Baltic States *[Dhaka Radio]* 34
Former President Ershad's Trial Continues 7 Sep 34
Newsman Asked Not To Interview *[Dhaka Radio]* 34
Trial Not To 'Belittle' Armed Forces *[AFP]* 34

India

Strike Call in Punjab Evokes 'Mixed Response' *[Delhi Radio]* 35
Further on Strike Call, Violence *[AFP]* 35
3 Pakistanis Injured in Punjab Train Attack *[Delhi Radio]* 35
Defense Minister Criticizes Pakistan on Kashmir *[Delhi Radio]* 35
Parties Deplore Pakistan Raising Kashmir Issue *[Delhi Radio]* 35
Troops Retake Area Seized by Pakistani Army *[AFP]* 36
2 Militants Killed, 8 Arrested in Kashmir *[Delhi Radio]* 36
Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia Independence Recognized *[Delhi Radio]* 36
Commentary Urges Sri Lanka To Resolve Conflicts *[Delhi International]* 36
Exchange Crisis Impairs Defense Preparedness *[Delhi Radio]* 37
Prime Minister Rao Says Economic Crisis Finished *[Delhi Radio]* 37
Bhutan King Begins 4-Day Official Visit *[Delhi Radio]* 37

Iran

President Accepts Saudi Invitation To Visit *[Tehran Radio]* 37
Velayati Denies Bid To Improve Ties With Egypt *[Tehran Radio]* 38
Besharati on Soviet Ties, Middle East Peace *[IRNA]* 38
Habibi Denies Hostage, Arms Purchase Link *[IRNA]* 38
President Welcomes Demise of 'Atheist' USSR *[Tehran Radio]* 39
President Discusses U.S. Theme for Hajj Rituals *[Tehran Radio]* 40
Belonogov Receives Ambassador, Velayati Note *[IRNA]* 40
Cabinet Approves Joining Dhaka Technical Center *[Tehran Radio]* 40
'New Cultural Movement' Viewed as Regime Failure *[Voice of Iranian Kordestan]* 40

Pakistan

Government To Recognize 3 Baltic Republics *[Islamabad Radio]* 41
Official Comments on Developments in Soviet Union *[Islamabad Radio]* 41
Four Killed, 24 Injured in Lahore Grenade Attack *[AFP]* 41
Prime Minister Expresses Concern *[Islamabad Radio]* 41
Curfew Imposed *[AFP]* 41
Fundamentalist Leader Hurt in Bomb Attack 6 Sep *[AFP]* 42
Bhutto: 'Great Pressure' To Quit Politics *[Delhi Radio]* 42
Major Party Withdraws Supports for Sharif *[Delhi Radio]* 42
One Killed, 18 Injured in Indian Train Attack *[Islamabad Radio]* 42
Concern Expressed to India *[Islamabad Radio]* 42
Satisfaction Expressed Over NAM Conference *[Islamabad Radio]* 42
PRC Economic Delegation Arrives on Week's Visit *[Islamabad Radio]* 43
Economic Commission Meeting Begins *[Islamabad Radio]* 43
More on Commission Meeting *[Islamabad Radio]* 43

Sri Lanka

Two Rebel Legislators 'Sacked' From Party *[AFP]* 43
Referendum Said Not Needed To Remove President *[Colombo International]* 44
Eight Rebel MPs Dismissed From Ruling Party *[AFP]* 44
Expelled Members Named *[Colombo International]* 45
Army Chief Warns Military To Remain Neutral *[AFP]* 45
Premadasa: 'Be Prepared for Elections' *[Delhi Radio]* 45

Inter-Arab Affairs

GCC, Iranian Ministers To View Gulf Security

NC0709084891 Paris AFP in English 0810 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Sept 7 (AFP)—The foreign ministers of Iran and its Gulf neighbours will meet this month to discuss post-war security in the region, a senior Gulf official was quoted Saturday as saying.

'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) secretary general, said the talks would be held in New York, where the United Nations is due to open its annual general assembly.

"Relations with Iran are moving positively," Bisharah told the UAE daily AL-ITTIHAD.

"The meeting in New York will be to work out a formula of mutual understanding rooted in the Doha (GCC) summit, the United Nations charter and international law," he said.

He said such a formula envisaged cooperation to achieve security in the Gulf and non-interference in each other's affairs.

Iran has demanded a role in any security arrangements in the Gulf but the request was apparently opposed by Egypt, which along with Syria and the GCC signed the Damascus Declaration in March to map out Arab security measures for the region.

Differences over that role and the shape of a proposed Arab force have undermined such arrangements, prompting Kuwait to act unilaterally by seeking a security pact with the United States.

But Bisharah, a Kuwaiti, said he expected a Gulf force to be created in five years.

"I think that in the next five years, we will have a deterrent Gulf force," he said. "The principle of self-reliance is logical. The people of the region should defend its resources and freedom."

Bisharah said the GCC states of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the UAE had agreed not to deal with the government of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, saying it remained a serious threat to the region.

"The joint Gulf army will be created to deal with potential threats, namely on the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border," he said.

"We have to be realistic and take into account that this regime is staying and should be dealt with by force."

He said a group of Iraqis who tried to land on the Kuwaiti island of Bubiyan last week had been dispatched by Baghdad and had wanted to "infiltrate into Kuwait to destabilise the emirate."

Iraqi Delegate to Arab League Reviews Bubiyan

NC0709173691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1445 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 7 Sep (MENA)—Ambassador Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent delegate to the Arab League, said that he will inform the Arab League secretariat of the findings outlined in the document prepared by a UN team which visited Kuwait's Bubiyan Island and Iraq's al-Faw Peninsula. According to the document, Iraq has not made any military landing on Bubiyan Island.

Najm held a news conference today and said that the UN team indicated in its report that the team members saw no material evidence of any Iraqi landing operation on the Kuwaiti island. He explained that what really happened was that a Kuwaiti patrol consisting of four boats seized 11 Iraqi fishing boats and a speed boat with 45 persons aboard off the shores of Bubiyan Island.

Najm added that the Kuwaiti authorities propagated this incident because they wanted to suggest that Iraq poses a permanent threat to Kuwait in an attempt to damage Iraq's reputation and portray it as a state which fails to abide by international resolutions, thus perpetuating the embargo against Iraq.

The Iraqi delegate said that his country does not want to create a state of tension in the region or provide any excuse for continuing the economic embargo that has been imposed against the Iraqi people. He went on to say that, since the beginning of the Arab League meetings in April, Iraq has been showing great interest in promoting Arab solidarity. He added: We must not remain captive to the past, and we must deeply analyze what has occurred from various angles and work out a formula which can bring prosperity to the Arab nation.

Najm also said that his country is in favor of amending the Arab League Charter.

Iraqi Delegate Speaks at Economic, Social Council

JN0709201391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1900 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 7 Sep (INA)—Iraq's permanent representative at the Arab League regretted the Arab League's failure to support Iraq's steps to end the unjust economic blockade.

In a speech to the Arab Economic and Social Council meeting in Cairo, the representative said that what Iraq wants is for a provision of Security Council Resolution No. 687 to be carried out. He said he regretted the Council's failure to support Iraq.

The Iraqi representative also accused the ruling authorities in Kuwait of working to hamper efforts to lift the blockade imposed on Iraq, asserting that the aim of the false Kuwaiti allegations about an Iraqi landing on Bubiyan Island is to distort Iraq's image and continue the blockade of its people, under the pretext that Iraq does not abide by the Security Council's resolutions.

He also stressed that it is not in Iraq's interest to create tension in the region or give any justification for the continued siege on it.

Libyan Officials Arrive for 10 Sep League Session

NC0809060491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2153 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 7 Sep (MENA)—Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the General People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation in the Libyan Jamahiriyah; Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Damm, coordinator of Libyan-Egyptian relations; and their accompanying delegation arrived in Cairo tonight.

The Libyan officials will attend the Arab League foreign ministers session opening on 10 September.

Palestinian Affairs

Bush Stance on Israeli Loans Welcomed

NC0709171891 Paris AFP in English 1616 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Tunis, Sept 7 (AFP)—President George Bush's bid to delay loan guarantees for Israel challenges "Israeli greediness" and lends credibility to America's commitment to the Middle East peace process, a PLO official said Saturday.

Bush's move is a "positive step (against) Israeli greediness," said Khalid al-Hasan, a central committee member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's main Fatah movement.

It "gives hope in the seriousness and credibility of the Bush-Baker commitment to their peace process," added the chairman of the foreign relations commitee of the Palestine National Council (PNC), or parliament in exile.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who has been trying to organize a Middle East peace conference for October, is due this month to make his seventh trip to the Middle East since the Gulf war ended in March.

PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, while in Sudan on Friday, met for the first time with leaders of Hamas, the Muslim fundamentalist group active in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank, an authoritative Palestinian source said here.

Talks focused on whether Hamas would attend the PNC meeting to convene in Algiers on September 22, where the Palestinians are to decide what position to take on the peace conference. Hamas, opposed to a negotiated Middle East settlement, is in conflict with the PLO.

Al-Hasan said changes in the Soviet Union have brought about a new era for peace.

"The era of the no-peace-no-war situation in the Middle East can no longer be sustained, because this same no-peace-no-war situation was the product of the Cold War—an era which is today over and done with," al-Hasan said.

Israel has asked for 10 billion dollars worth of loan guarantees to help resettle Soviet Jews. But Bush, reflecting concern in Washington that the guarantees may be used to house immigrants in the occupied territories, asked for the issue to be delayed for 120 days to give peace a chance.

Al-Hasan added that he hoped Washington adopted an equally "positive, sincere and human" attitude towards the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Baker Visit Not Welcome If Policy Unchanged

JN0809190891 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Sep 91 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "We Are Not Looking Forward to His Return"]

[Text] There are conflicting reports about U.S. Secretary of State James Baker returning to the region before the end of this month. While Israeli sources confirm that his return is imminent, we see U.S. President George Bush himself denying these reports. He even goes beyond this when he casts doubts on the possibility that the expected peace conference will be convened next month according to the set timetable.

The Israelis are eager to have the secretary return, especially Minister Sharon, who sees it as an opportunity to start the settlement plan, a plan he announced a few days ago and which will cover Arab territories with settlements so there will be not even an inch left to negotiate on. However, in us, his return only arouses feelings of anger against U.S. policies, which Baker carries out in his shuttle diplomacy. This is a diplomacy that has given the Palestinians only more settlements instead of a serious U.S. position to make Israel stop its policies, which Washington has rejected on more than one occasion.

A seventh, an eighth, or even a thousandth tour to the region by the U.S. secretary will not help achieve the desired peace as long as the Americans lack the seriousness needed to establish the pillars of peace. Baker, as much as Bush, knows that convening the peace conference in October and establishing the bases for a comprehensive peace in the region depend on the Israeli leaders giving up their rejection of the requirements for such a peace.

We will never welcome Secretary Baker's return to the region as long as he continues to pursue the same policies encouraging Israel's rejection of the requirements for peace, as long as the United States fails to show the necessary seriousness to stop settlement-building in the occupied territories, and as long as it does not abide by international legitimacy regarding Palestine according to the same criteria it applied in the Gulf.

PNC Executive Committee Meets for Preparations

Factional Differences Cause Delay

LD0809105191 Algiers APS in Arabic 0945 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Algiers, 8 August 1991, APS—It is expected that the preparatory meetings for the Palestinian National Council, which will convene in Algiers on 22 September, will open today or tomorrow at the latest.

Official Palestinian sources attributed deferment of these meetings, which were scheduled to open on 4 September, to the absence from the Tunisian capital of the leaders of the Palestinian factions who usually meet before the convening of the Extended Preparatory Committee. The committee includes the PLO Executive Committee, the National Council Bureau, and the faction leaders.

Those sources told APS that contacts with the factions which did not participate in the last national council have been very positive, with the exception of those with the Hamas movement. Al- Sa'iqah and the Popular Front have conveyed to the General Command and the Palestinian Salvation Front their willingness to participate in the preparatory meetings without waiting for participation of the Abu Musa group, Fatah-al-Intifadah, Fatah-Revolutionary Council, or the Revolutionary Communist Party.

On the other hand, Abu Musa has expressed readiness to adopt all the resolutions to be issued by the Palestinian National Council without actually particpating in it.

As to the Hamas movement, with whom the Palestinian factions and 'Arafat had already held meetings in Amman and Sudan respectively, it became clear that it does not intend to participate as it has laid down impossible conditions.

The aforementioned Palestinian sources stressed the need for holding the preparatory meetings on schedule so that adequate preparation can be made for the next national council, especially since the tabled dossiers cannot tolerate procrastination.

The sources justified their insistence on convening the Palestinian National Council on schedule on the grounds that the Americans and the Soviets could take a decision to convene the peace conference at any time, which requires Palestinian prior readiness through [words indistinct] for all the Palestinian factions toward the peace conference, the basis of convening it and the issue of palestinian representation.

The sources did not conceal fears of the possibility of the emergence of a current call for the suspension of the Palestinian stance until the U.S. stance on the peace conference becomes clear, and for people to wait to see what results James Baker's Middle East tour will lead to.

Intifadah, PNC Session Discussed

JN0809174491 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] The day before yesterday [6 September], the PLO Executive Committee convened under its chairman, brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], to discuss the latest political developments and ongoing moves to advance the chances for regional peace. The PLO Executive Committee meeting also took up intifadah-related developments and explored ways to thwart the Zionist occupation authorities as they escalate their repression against our Palestinian people.

The Executive Committee discussed arrangements for convening the 20th congress of the Palestine National Council [PNC] in the Algerian capital later this month.

The PLO adopted a number of important resolutions, including sending letters to the five permanent UN Security Council members and the UN chief to lobby for support for the 86 PNC members residing in the occupied land seeking permission to leave for the council's 20th congress.

Baltics Situation Reviewed

LD0809195991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee, presided over by President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], the president of the state of Palestine and the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, convened the session of its meetings after 'Arafat's return from his African tour. During the meeting, the latest current political developments, and the movements and contacts which are under way in connection with the peace process in the area were discussed. The Executive Committee also discussed the situation inside the occupied Palestinian territories in light of the developments of our people's heroic intifadah and the means to confront the Zionist occcupation authorities' intensification of repression and oppression against our Palestinian people.

The Executive Committee also discussed the latest developments and arrangements concerning the convening of the 20th session of the Palestine National Council [PNC] this month in the Algerian capital. The Executive Committee adopted a number of important decisions among which are: sending letters to the five permanent UN Security Council members, as well as to the U.N. secretary general, concerning allowing the 86 representatives of the Palestinian people, who are resident of the occupied Palestinian territories and members of the PNC, to participate in the proceedings of the 20th PNC session in Algiers.

On the other hand, the PLO Executive Committee in its current session, dwelt on the independence of the three Baltic states, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, and their peoples' acquisition of all their rights, especially their right to self-determination. While the Executive Committee addresses salutations and congratulationx to the

Baltic peoples and states and wishes them prosperity and progress, it hopes that the international community pays the same interest to the right of our Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state.

'Palestinian Sources' Say PNC To Meet 23 Sep

NC0709151191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1357 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Tunis, 7 Sep (MENA)—Palestinian sources affirmed that the new formation of the Palestine National Council [PNC] will hold its first ordinary session on 23 September in Algiers.

These sources told our correspondent here that the prparatory committee left it up to Palestinian president and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to change that date if developments so require.

Some Palestinian sources earlier said that the possibility that the peace conference scheduled to be held in October could be delayed until November might in turn postpone the PNC meeting until next month.

The Palestinian leadership is expected to hold meetings over the next two days to work out a political document, which will be presented to the PNC meeting, outlining the PLO's stand on Palestinian representation at the peace conference and the Palestinians' firm positions on the right to self-determination and the right to establish a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. The Palestinian leadership is also expected to discuss the candidates for membership in the PLO Executive Comittee and Central Council before presenting their names to the PNC. They also plan to review the complete list of names of the members of the PNC's new formation that the preparatory committee proposed at its Tunis meetings in July. The committee prepared the list in light of the results from the dialogue with the Hamas Movement in the occupied territories and with the Damacus-based Palestine National Salvation Front.

Ambassador to Jordan on Date

LD0909075591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Excerpt] In the Middle East, the date of the 20th session of the Palestine National Council [PNC] has been officially fixed for 23 September in Algiers. The Palestinian ambassador to Jordan announced this in a statement to AFP. Thus, the meeting is being postponed by three days for technical reasons, the same official added. [passage omitted]

Further on Comments

JN0809090391 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Sep 91 pp 1, 14

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestinian ambassador to Jordan and Fatah Central Committee member, said that 23 September was set as the date for convening the Palestine National Council [PNC] in the Algerian capital.

The Palestinian official explained that the reasons for postponing the meeting, which was scheduled for 20 September, for three days are not Palestinian, but rather are related to the technical preparations for convening the council.

In his statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim explained that the Palestinian leadership—made up of the PLO Executive Committee, Fatah Central Committee, and the factions' secretaries general—will begin a series of meetings today in Tunis. The leadership will prepare the agenda for the PNC's 20th session. It will also prepare the necessary reports on the latest emergency developments in the Palestine question, and on the outcome of the Palestinian leadership's contacts with the Arab and foreign countries in order to submit them to the PNC to adopt appropriate decisions with regard to the Palestinian participation in the peace conference.

Answering a question by SAWT AL-SHA'B on the Jordanian-Palestinian relations, the Fatah Central Committee member and the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan said that these good relations, whose pillars were anchored by His Majesty King Husayn and his brother President Yasir 'Arafat, are a model of fraternal relations to be emulated. He also said that the degree of understanding and coordination between Jordan and the PLO is very high and is continuing.

On forming the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to attend the peace conference, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim explained that the joint delegation is not an issue of disagreement between Jordan and the PLO as the Israeli sides try to depict. Rather, Israel obstructs the peace process by refusing to comply with the international legitimacy and its resolutions, refusing to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, also refusing to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. It insists to exclude from the negotiations holy Jerusalem, which no Palestinian, Arab, or Muslim will abandon, and continues to build settlements in pursuit of its policy to swallow up land. All this is accompanied by its inhumane repressive and savage practices against the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories. This people will press ahead with its struggle until the attainment of its legitimate national rights.

Concluding his statement, the ambassador stressed that the PLO still insists on the guarantees it requested from the U.S. Administration. Meanwhile, he indicted that the Palestinian leadership has not yet received a response from Washington on these guarantees.

U.S. Guarantees Demanded by PLO Listed

PM0609150391 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 4 Sep 91 pp1, 4

['Ali Nun and Samir Nasif report: "The PLO Asks Israel To Take 28 Trust-Building Measures Before Conference"]

[Text] London—Well-informed Arab diplomatic sources in London told AL-HAYAH that the special Palestinian committee, which met in London about two weeks ago to draft a message containing the guarantees required from the United States before agreement to participate in the forthcoming peace conference, sent a message to the Israeli Government through Washington listing measures the Tel Aviv government should take to "build trust between the two sides."

'Afif Safiyah, head of the PLO mission in London, stated that the message contains the following requests:

1. Immediate cessation of settlement activity in the occupied territories, including occupied Jerusalem.

2. Implementation of the Security Council resolutions on repatriation of those deported from the occupied territories.

3. Discontinuation of the emergency laws in the occupied territories.

4. Release of the Palestinian detainees and closure of the Nafhah and Ansar-3 prisons.

5. Abolition of the restrictions imposed on the activities of the International Red Cross Commission and the United Nations Relief and Work Agency [UNRWA].

6. Abolition of the decisions restricting movement between the West Bank and occupied Jerusalem.

7. Abolition of the taxes imposed after 1976 on economic and educational establishments in the occupied territories.

8. Lifting of censorship on newspapers, books, magazines, songs, and plays.

9. Freedom to form unions and establishments and to hold meetings without the interference of the military authorities.

10. Abolition of the restrictions imposed on the import and export of all industrial and agricultural products to and from the West Bank and Gaza.

11. A halt to the demolition of houses on the pretext that they were built illegally, and abolition of the restrictions imposed on construction in the occupied territories.

12. Reinstatement of the dismissed elected and legitimate municipal councils.

13. Abolition of the restrictions preventing Palestine National Council [PNC] members residing in the occupied territories from attending PNC meetings wherever they are held.

14. Evacuation of the settlers from the Saint John monastery in Jerusalem.

15. Discontinuation of the use of the term "Judaea and Samaria" by Israeli officials and media.

16. Agreement to begin implementation of UN resolution 681 which calls for international protection for the people of the occupied territories.

17. Termination of the Israeli Government's interference in the affairs of the electricity company in Jerusalem.

18. Lifting of the ban on the building of a commercial port in Gaza and and on the construction of a cement factory in Hebron.

19. Reopening of the closed educational institutions, schools, colleges, and universities.

20. Abolition of the restrictions imposed on the entry of funds for individuals and establishments.

21. Allowing the reopening of Arab banks in the occupied territories without submitting them to the authority of the Israeli central bank.

22. Cessation of the Israeli media's insulting charges against the PLO.

23. Abolition of (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq) Shamir's law which punishes anyone who declares loyalty to the PLO, and the law which punishes anyone who raises the Palestinian flag.

24. Reduction of the military presence and transfer of the military commands from Palestinian towns, villages, and camps, and discontinuation of military exercises in the occupied territories.

25. Removal of the restrictions imposed on freedom of speech and political activity and affiliation.

26. Nonobstruction of any development projects, including projects carried out by UN organizations.

27. Restoration of the expropriated lands and property in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to their legitimate owners.

28. Initiation of family reunions and easing of the restrictions regarding permits and permit holders (in connection with entry to and exit from the occupied territories).

Safiyah said that the message was drafted by the Palestinian committee designated by the PLO leadership in Tunis after 35 hours of extensive discussions covering the following four specific issues:

1. The course of Palestinian political action since 1988.

2. The points to be included in the message on the required guarantees from Washington.

3. The various formulas for solving the problem of Palestinian representation at the international conference.

4. The link between the interim period and the final settlement for the occupied territories, and what is required of the Israelis in a message on trust-building steps.

The meetings are known to have been attended by Professor Edward Said, Professor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, Professor Walid al-Khalidi, Basil 'Aql, Palestinian UN Representative Nasir Qudwah, PLO London Mission Representative 'Afif Safiyah, Professor Musa Mazzawi, Zakariya al-Agha, and Zuhayrah Kamal, in addition to Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, Faysal al-Husayni, and the central representative who attended as the representative of the PLO leadership in Tunis.

Safiyah said that the Palestinian leadership expects a reply to its message before or on the eve of the peace conference. He added: "It is, at any rate, a test of the extent of U.S. decisionmaking independence or, in other words, the extent of Tel Aviv's influence on Washington's policy on the Palestinian question, and vice versa."

He spoke of the importance of the participation of Palestinian academicians in these meetings, a matter "reflecting the seriousness of the PLO's quest for a just and lasting peace based on legitimate UN resolutions—a seriousness felt by those concerned with the affairs of the region in the West in general and in Washington in particular."

Hamas Meets 'Arafat, Rejects 'U.S.' Settlement

NC0809103591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1005 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Khartoum, 8 Sep (MENA)—Sources in the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, reported that a delegation from the group led by Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah met with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Khartoum on 6 September. Hamas rejected the so-called U.S. settlement for the region and demanded that 'Arafat also reject it during the meeting.

Hamas set certain conditions for participating in the upcoming Palestine National Council [PNC] session, including the holding of elections to choose the Palestinian people's representatives as the only way of gauging the strength of the Palestinian factions. Should it prove impossible to hold elections, Hamas insists that it be given not less than 40 percent of the total number of PNC seats.

The sources said that the PLO and Hamas agreed to continue their dialogue in order to further the Palestinian cause.

Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council in Sudan, met with the Hamas delegation last night. The delegation arrived in Khartoum on 6 September.

PNSF Chairman Reiterates National Dialogue

JN0509182391 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Palestinian National Salvation Front [PNSF] Chairman Khalid al-Fahum stated the following:

Several parties are talking about dates for holding the Palestine National Council [PNC]. Out of concern for Palestinian unity, we, in the PNSF, want to explain the following:

1. The PNSF still adheres to the 8 April 1991 initiative on comprehensive national dialogue to which all the resistance factions and nationalist figures should be invited to assess the past stage and to prepare for the confrontation of new developments.

2. The PNSF is completely concerned about the success of the comprehensive national dialogue so that the new PLO leadership enjoys the confidence of all our masses and their effective and vital forces.

3. The PNSF hopes that the comprehensive national dialogue initiative will not be ignored for any reason. For its part, the PNSF, during these difficult days, calls on all parties to overcome any formalities that may postpone or ignore the dialogue.

'Arafat Meets With Mandela, Zimbabwe's Mugabe

LD0509193991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the State of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, met in Lusaka yesterday evening with his militant brother Nelson Mandela, African National Congress [ANC] chairman, in the presence of militant Oliver Tambo, former ANC chairman.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interest, especially developments in the Palestinian question and our people's blessed intifadah inside the occupied land. They also surveyed current settlement moves in the Middle East and the convening of the peace conference. In addition, they reviewed developments in the situation in South Africa, efforts to abolish apartheid and establish a democratic system, and the successful steps taken by the people of South Africa and their national leadership, despite the attempts being still made by the extremists and their stooges there. The meeting was attended by brother 'Abdallah Hurani, member of the PLO Executive Committee, and the Palestinian ambassador to Zambia.

Brother President Abu 'Ammar arrived in Lusaka yesterday evening from Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, where he had held important talks with President Robert

Mugabe within the context of mutual consultation between the states of Palestine and Zimbabwe. The two presidents examined matters relating to Middle East developments, the question of Palestine, and the proposed peace conference. During the meeting, President Mugabe reiterated his country's supportive stance for the Palestinian cause and the just struggle of our people to recover their national rights, including the right to return, to self-determination, and to the establishment of their independent state, with honorable Jerusalem as its capital.

Israeli Force Storms 'Old' AL-FAJR Offices

JN0809170091 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] Jerusalem—An Israeli force yesterday stormed the old offices of AL-FAJR in Nabulus Street in Jerusalem. They searched for provocative material and seized the identity card of Norma Sinyurah, wife of the paper's editor, Hanna Sinyurah.

Algeria

Bendjedid Receives Velayati, Rafsanjani Message

LD0209200791 Tehran IRNA in English 1348 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Text] Algiers, Sept. 2, IRNA—Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati handed over a message from President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to his Algerian counterpart Chadli Bendjedid in a meeting here today.

Mutual relations and issues of the Muslim world and Palestine were discussed in the meeting, and the two sides decided to hold constant talks, Velayati told reporters after the meeting.

On the developments in the Soviet Union Velayati said Iran follows the events carefully, adding that the will of the Soviet people is important for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Velayati left here for Banjul, Gambia, today at the end of his two-day visit to Algeria.

Envoy Conveys al-Qadhdhafi Message to Bendjedid

LD0309124891 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 3 Aug 91

[Text] President of the Republic Chadli Bendjedid this morning received at the Presidency the special envoy of Colonel Mu-ammar al-Qadhdhafi, Mr. Ibrahim al-Bishari, the secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation. The audience was attended by the Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi, and the secretary of the Libyan Arab Brotherhood Bureau in Algiers. Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's special envoy stated after the audience: I handed to Mr. Chadli Bendjedid an important message from his brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in connection with issues of mutual interest, and conveyed to him the latter's thanks and appreciation for Algeria's participation—through its president—in the celebrations held by the Libyan people of the arrival of the waters of the Great Manmade River to Benghazi.

FLN Political Bureau Issues Statement

LD0409025591 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 3 Sep 91

[Text] Within the context of the partisan activities, the National Liberation Front [FLN] Political Bureau today issued a statement saying that the organization of the legislative elections should remain at the top of the priority list, and that legal and administrative measures should accompany the handling of the current political issues, at the forefront of which are the return to normality in the country, lifting the state of siege, and providing the necessary conditions for the people to choose in complete freedom among all the programs and parties without exception.

The Political Bureau calls for a meeting of the parliamentary liaison committee soon and organization of a parliamentary day for studying the government's proposed amendments of the parliamentary laws.

The Political Bureau listened to reports from the governorates of the southern Wilayas about the security situation and the problems faced by the citizens, especially in the border areas.

The Political Bureau has decided to intensify the contacts and exert efforts at both the official and popular levels in order to make wisdom and dialogue prevail in dealing with the origins of the crisis. The Political Bureau also calls on the people and activists in these areas to be alert and perceptive in order to deprive the dividing elements of any opportunity and to block the way of foreign schemes.

Situation 'Critical,' Bread in Short Supply

LD0509095591 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] In Algeria, Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali has stressed that the financial situation of Algeria is critical and that $2.5 billion must be found to conclude the supplementary budget of the current year. He said his government is currently negotiating loans with a number of western and international banks which would enable it to cover the balance of payments deficit and get out of the vicious circle of indebtedness. However, the loan negotiations have not yet reached any agreement. The government hopes that an agreement will be reached as soon as possible.

The Algerian grains department denied that Algeria will be exposed to a large food shortage in coming months because of the deficit of the strategic stock of grains. A number of Algerian newspapers recently talked about the phenomenon of long queues in a number of Algiers suburbs before the bakeries awaiting bread. The newspapers reported that Algeria is suffering from a large shortage in flour and bread which could become a huge and dangerous shortage during the coming October.

Wheat Stockpiles Meet Algeria's Needs for 1991

LD0509111991 Algiers APS in English 1022 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Algiers, September 5 (APS)—Algeria has stockpiled enough wheat to meet Algeria's needs till the first term of next year noted the Algerian Interprofessionel Office of Cereals (OAIC). Therefore, it announced that the national stockpiling till August 31 has already reached 15.2 million quintals (harvest campaign is not over yet), on the other hand, imports of the same products averaged 2.3 million tonnes at the first semester of this year for a 5 million tonne amount in the current year and national consumption is amounted at 5 million tonnes a year.

Wheat's availability is in advance thanks to a good cereal campaign that has has beaten all records connected with an exceptionnally favourable juncture of the international market, according to the same sources.

Egypt

Provisions of U.S.-Kuwaiti Agreement Reported

NC0609154891 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 3 Sep 91 pp 1,9

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[Text] Political sources have told AL-SHA'B that the U.S. military agreement with Kuwait allows the Pentagon to use any Kuwaiti territories for the establishment of U.S. military installations under the pretext of protecting Kuwait. According to this agreement, Washington will enjoy the privilege of increasing the American troops to any number it wants and the American military experts will be directly responsible for supervising all development and preparation plans within the Kuwaiti Army.

According to the same sources, the agreement allows the Pentagon to protect the Kuwaiti oil facilities in whatever from it deems suitable, without any interference from the Kuwaiti Government. The sources assert that the agreement involves secret provisions that have not been published. These provisions stipulate that the United States will have priority over any other party in exploiting the Kuwaiti oil fields and in investing Kuwaiti capital in giant projects inside Kuwait.

Moreover, the United States will enjoy further privileges according to this agreement, which will consecrate the complete American occupation of the Kuwaiti territories.

The same sources note that the Pentagon is developing new military agreements for Saudi Arabia to sign. They will involve the same privileges the Americans will enjoy according to the agreement with Kuwait.

Cairo Welcomes Bush's Stand on Israeli Loans

NC0909072991 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0700 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Ministry official spokesman Naji al-Ghatrifi has welcomed U.S. President George Bush's request to Congress that it postpone consideration of Israel's request for loan guarantees. The spokesman said President Bush's request shows the extent of the U.S. commitment to maintaining the peace process and preserving the delicate balance that resulted in the agreement of the parties concerned on holding a peace conference in October.

The official spokesman underlined the great importance attached to U.S. credibility in the region and that country's role in bringing the disputing parties to the negotiating table.

Fatah Envoy on Bush's Policy

NC0809144691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1400 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 8 Sep (MENA)—Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah representative and acting Palestinian ambassador to Egypt, has said that President Bush's call for postponing the loan guarantees to Israel is a positive step on the right path. He expressed his hope that this step will herald the start of genuine U.S. pressure on Israel to end its intransigence on the issue of the Palestinian people's rights. He made a statement today that since he assumed his post, President Bush has made several positive statements on the Palestinian issue. He said: We hope the U.S. Administration will take action so that these statements can be translated into reality. He also expressed his hope that the U.S. Administration will not resort to using convoluted methods to find other ways of giving aid to Israel, thus aborting President's Bush's decision to postpone giving Israel any guarantees. He called for speedy U.S. action to ensure international protection of the occupied land.

Paper Praises Bush

NC0809060391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2136 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 7 Sep (MENA)—In its editorial tomorrow, the newspaper AL-AKHBAR describes U.S. President George Bush's refusal to ratify Israel's request for $10 million [as received] in loan guarantees to finance the building of new settlements in the occupied Arab territories as a logical move that affirms his commitment to his repeatedly stated position that the Jewish settlements represent a major obstacle to any kind of peace between the Arabs and Israel.

The paper says that any other position by the U.S. President would have shaken confidence in him and his government not just among Arabs but throughout the world.

The paper adds that the U.S. President seems determined to succeed where earlier U.S. administrations and presidents failed and to bring about a permanent end to the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors. He is motivated here not by any bias in favor of the Arabs, but by a desire to serve the ultimate good of the state which the United States helped create and survive.

In conclusion, the paper notes that the U.S. President's announcement that discussion of the Israeli request would be postponed for a few months made Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir lose his temper and threaten to withdraw from the peace conference Bush has called for October.

Paper Views Secretary Baker's Upcoming Tour

NC0809170391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 8 Sep (MENA)—In its editorial today, AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I said that U.S. Secretary of

State James Baker's upcoming Mideast tour should be decisive and that a specific date for the peace conference must be set during this tour, because October is rapidly approaching. President George Bush and President Mikhail Gorbachev have declared their commitment to convening this conference in October. The paper said that the date cannot be fixed until Israel abandons its unfair conditions on Palestinian representation and agrees to stop building settlements in the occupied Arab territories. The paper pointed out that Baker should use all his diplomatic finesse to lead Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to adopt a more flexible position.

AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I noted that what is clear so far is that Israel does not want to achieve genuine peace with the region's countries, because it rejects the interpretation of Security Council Resolution 242 embodied in the principle of land for peace and holds on to an outmoded interpretation of this resolution which enables it to keep the occupied Arab territories and achieve its own conception of peace. The paper said that Israel wants capitulation, not peace, from the Arabs.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: We expect that Baker, whose tour begins Sunday with a visit to Israel, the intransigent party, will have many cards which he can play to force Israel to adopt a flexible policy instead of continuing with its current unbending stance.

Ghali Views Coming Tour, USSR Republics

NC0709143591 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Dr. Butrus Ghali, deputy prime minister for foreign relations and minister of state for emigration and Egyptians abroad affairs, held a news conference today and declared that Egypt will establish diplomatic relations in the near future with the three Baltic Republics that it recognized yesterday. He added that, if other republics declare their independence, Egypt would follow its policy of abiding by the decision of the mother state, and thus its firm stance would be in line with the position the Soviet Union has adopted on this issue. This policy also applies to the situations in Somalia and Ethiopia.

Dr. Ghali said that President Husni Mubarak has asked him to take U.S. President George Bush a letter on the latest developments in the Mideast region. He said that he will do so when he visits the United States on the tour he is going to begin tomorrow, which will take him first to Britain to hold talks with Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd.

Dr. Ghali said that he will then hold similar talks in France, where he will also attend the francophone states' foreign ministers conference to prepare for the African-French summit conference scheduled to be held in Gabon next year. He said that he will then visit the United States and Canada.

Dr. Ghali said that he is optimistic about the possibility of convening a Middle East peace conference in October and added that the United States is holding contacts to remove the obstacles facing the conference, particularly the problem of Palestinian representation. He emphasized that the events in the Soviet Union will not affect the Soviet stance on the peace process, and said that the Soviet Union will continue to contribute to the peace efforts and will attend the Mideast peace conference.

Regarding Egyptian-African relations, Dr. Ghali affirmed that Egypt is actively promoting its relations with the African states in all fields, as evidenced by Cairo's plans to host the pan-African sports meeting, which will include teams from 40 African states.

On nominations to the post of UN secretary general, Dr. Butrus Ghali said that the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council's permanent member states will hold consultations on this issue during the second half of this month. He said that Egypt would like an African candidate to be chosen to represent the world's states in this post and added that the responses Egypt has received from various states regarding the Egyptian candidacy have been positive.

Preparations Completed for Resettlements in Libya

NC0809060691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2115 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Cairo, 7 Sep (MENA)—AL-AHRAM reports tomorrow that preparations have been completed to resettle 1 million Egyptian peasants in Libya in pursuance of the directives of Arab leaders President Husni Mubarak and brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, and as part of the continuous consolidation of Egyptian-Libyan ties in all fields to achieve integration between the two countries' peoples.

The paper says that the first group will leave for Libya in December. It consists of 100 families made up of 500 people as well as the workers who will provide them with various services.

The paper cites 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qa'ud, secretary of the General People's Committee for Agriculture Reform and Land Reclamation in the Jamahiriyah, as saying that the Egyptians will be resettled on half a million feddans in the al-Wigh area in the central part of southern Libya. He added that each family will receive 15 feddans at a nominal cost with no downpayment. The families will have 15 years to pay for the land.

Al-Qa'ud said the land given to the peasants will be level and serviced by electricity grids and drip-irrigation systems. He added that one cooperative will be established for every 50 peasants to provide all services as well as interest-free loans with a 20-year repayment period.

Sandstone Exports to Israel Called 'Conspiracy'

NC0609153791 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 3 Sep 91 p 1

[Excerpt] This is one of the most horrendous crimes our government is committing against occupied Palestine

and against our people who are standing fast under the fist of annihilation and displacement.

When this government is filling the world with its protests against the Zionist enemy's expansion of settlements in the occupied territories, our colleague Sha'ban 'Abd-al-Rahman has discovered, after a much painstaking investigation, that our government has exported more than 60,000 cubic meters of first-class sandstone to Israel in the last eight months. The sandstone is being used to build settlements in the occupied territories.

This major conspiracy was carried out by the Egyptian Sandstone Company, which has five affiliated factories producing this type of stone. The sandstone was transported by trucks belonging to the Heavy Transport Authority and the Nile Transport Company, both state-owned, and several private-sector companies. [passage omitted]

Clash Between Police, Villagers Reported

NC0609115191 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 3 Sep 91 p 1

[Report by Yahya Yawfiq]

[Text] Qina—Seven people were killed, nine more wounded, and 90 arrested when residents of the Naj' al-Diyabat area of al-Samata village, which is located in the district of Dishna in Qina Governorate, clashed with security forces who were searching for a gang of highway robbers the villagers were hiding. The members of the gang were arrested after a 16-hour gunbattle between the police and the villagers.

Large quantities of weapons and ammunition were seized and the five accused referred to the prosecutor's office. Qina Attorney General Badri 'Abd-al-Fattah has opened an investigation.

Sudan

Khartoum Gives Permission for Relief Flights

AB0209141391 Paris AFP in English 1355 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Nairobi, Sept 2 (AFP)—United Nations relief flights to rebel-held southern Sudan are to resume Tuesday [3 September] as the Khartoum government has given permission for the planes to land in areas outside its control, a senior UN official said Monday.

Flights were suspended last week when the Sudanese government failed to give clearance for flights to territory controlled by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Carlton James, information coordinator of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which has three planes carrying food and medicine to refugees and famine victims in the south, told AFP that the Sudanese government had given permission on Monday.

"Flight clearances have been approved as submitted and flights resume on Tuesday," James said. [passage omitted]

Red Cross Plane Destroyed by Landmine

LD0209164391 Bern Swiss Radio International in English 1530 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Text] An aircraft belonging to the All-Swiss International Committee of the Red Cross has exploded after hitting a landmine on the runway in Sudan. Relief officials in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, said five people were injured when the aircraft, a C-130 Hercules, exploded at the airfield of the town of Wau, in the south of the country. The aircraft was delivering relief supplies to the area when it hit the mine. Although government-controlled, Wau is under siege from the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army, which has a stronghold in the south of the country.

Government Protests French Minister's Statements

EA0209203591 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1532 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Sep (SUNA)—The Sudanese Government today protested statements made in Nairobi by Bernard Kouchner, the French minister of state for humanitarian affairs, after his visits to rebel areas in southern Sudan. The Foreign Ministry today summoned the French charge d'affaires in Khartoum and delivered to him the Sudanese Government's protest against the French minister's approach. It demanded an official explanation from the French Government concerning Kouchner's statement. Today the Foreign Ministry issued the following statement:

Following the statements made by Bernard Kouchner, the French minister of state for humanitarian affairs, in Nairobi after visiting the rebel areas in southern Sudan, the Foreign Ministry summoned the French charge d'affaires. He was informed of the Sudanese Government's protest against the approach adopted by the French minister, inasmuch as he went to the rebel areas against the wishes of and without informing the legitimate government of Sudan and without informing it, at a time when he had twice begged to be excused from paying an official visit to Khartoum after the completion of arrangements to perform his task.

The Foreign Ministry conveyed to the French charge d'affaires the Sudanese authorities' astonishment that the French minister of state should set up himself as a spokesman of the rebel movement in the news conference he held yesterday in Nairobi following his return from Kapoeta in the south of the country.

Regarding the French minister's statement about thousands of children and [word indistinct] living in the Gurku area without care and his surprise at there being nobody to look after them, it would have been more appropriate for the French official to have inferred that these were the ones taken forcibly by Garang from their

families to enlist them in the rebel ranks, as was revealed last week by some of the leaders of the movement.

The Foreign Ministry pointed out that the French minister, in his news conference directed (?accusations) against the Government of Sudan of obstructing relief operations and refusing to grant permission for aircraft to transport relief supplies at the very time yesterday when the U.N. representative and coordinator of relief operations in Nairobi confirmed the continuation of close cooperation between the government and the United Nations and the voluntary organizations to take relief supplies to the needy and the affected in all parts of the country.

In this context, the Foreign Ministry clarified that the Government of Sudan had since 27 May accepted the U.N. proposals on the lifeline operation in its third stage, but the rebel movement had not yet declared its position. In spite of this, the Government of Sudan, conscious of its responsibilities to its citizens in all parts of the country, had agreed to the transport of relief supplies by the United Nations to the affected areas.

The course adopted by the French minister of state did not conform with diplomatic norms and international charters, particularly inasmuch as France has had great and long experience in this field and is among the nations which contributed to the formulation of international laws.

The behavior of the French minister must be regarded as unfriendly toward (?Sudan) and could reflect negatively on the good relations between the two countries and on the efforts being made to achieve peace and stability in Sudan. The Government of Sudan, therefore, demands from the French Government an official explanation of the contents of Kouchner's statements and at the same time confirms its interest in the continuation and development of the existing relations between the two countries.

Khalifah Asks SPLA To Present Program

EA0709172591 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Colonel Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, member of the Revolution Command Council [RCC], acting chairman of the political committee, and head of the peace and foreign relations department, has called on the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA] to submit its peace program and to prepare for negotiations.

When Col. Khalifah met the governor and government of upper Nile Province in Malakal the day before yesterday, he said that the recent return of between 3,000 and 4,000 rebel supporters to Malakal provides strong proof of the objectivity of the revolution's programs and evidence of the efficacy of the plan that aims at besieging the rebel movement militarily, informationally, and politically inside the country and in the neighboring states.

Col. Khalifah explained that upper Nile Province will be the first state in which peace will prevail, pointing out that the amnesty, announced by the leader of the revolution, for those who took up arms against the homeland is still valid. His excellency affirmed that every rebel returning voluntarily to the fold of the homeland will receive material and moral support and will be absorbed into work. He can participate in political work in the country.

Col. Khalifah addressed officers, NCO's, and soldiers of the Artillery Corps in Malakal. He said the Armed Forces have the greatest positive role in making and preserving peace. He said the appearance of propitious signs of peace does not mean disarming the fighting armed forces, noting that the armed forces have a basic duty to force the other side to accept negotiations and strike whoever fights citizens and threatens national security.

His excellency also met officers, NCO's, and soldiers of the regular forces at Police Headquarters in Malakal. He affirmed that the forthcoming stage in the peace process represents a basic stage for preserving security and stability. His excellency lauded the regular forces' revolutionary stand and their earnest effort to spread order and security in the regions of the country. He presented his donation for 25,000 [Sudanese] pounds for the province's regular forces.

Garang Confirms Control, Denies Rights Abuses

AB0809191091 Paris AFP in English 1832 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Torit, rebel-held southern Sudan, Sept 8 (AFP)—Sudanese rebel leader John Garang, shaken by accusations of "a reign of terror" by fellow commanders who claimed to have toppled him, on Sunday [8 September] strongly denied having committed human rights abuses.

Colonel Garang, flanked by eight of his Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) commanders, told journalists in Torit, near Sudan's southern border with Uganda, that he was "firmly in charge." He dismissed the dissidents' announcement of 10 days ago that they had removed him because of his human rights abuses, which they said included forcibly recruiting children to fight in the eight-year war between Sudan's Arab north and African south, and jailing fellow-officers without justification.

After Bernard Kouchner, French junior minister for humanitarian action, discovered a camp of some 10,000 abandoned children during a 24-hour visit to rebel-held southern Sudan a week ago, Garang and the SPLA have come under fire from the Khartoum government for allegedly forcing children to fight. Garang, however, dismissed the accusations, saying he could not arm all the men in his movement, fighting to free mainly Christian and animist southern Sudan from domination by the Islamic north.

"I have 15,000 recruits who are adults and have been trained, but I haven't got enough guns for them," he said. Journalists who visited the camp near the Ethiopian border on Sunday where Kouchner was moved at the sight of thousands of abandoned children saw no evidence that they were being given military training.

Officials of the SPLA's humanitarian wing, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association, said the children, almost all boys, had left their families to attend school in Ethiopia.

They returned with hundreds of thousands of other Sudanese refugees after Ethiopia's former dictator Mengistu Haile-Mariam was overthrown in May and Addis Ababa's new government expelled the SPLA from its bases in Ethiopia, the officials said.

Arab, Foreign Support for Failed Coup Alleged

NC3008195991 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Aug 91 p 1, 9

[Report by Mahmud Bakri and Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah]

[Excerpt] High-level Arab sources have told AL-SHA'B that the military officers who have been detained in Khartoum recently on charges of planning to overthrow the regime in Sudan set 28 August as the date to stage their coup. These sources said that the date was selected because Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council, would be out of the country participating in Libya's celebration marking the inauguration of the first stage of the Great Manmade River.

These sources affirmed that foreign parties were behind the coup attempt. The information noted that the personnel who took part in the attempt and the instigators received more than $20 million in arms from Arab parties. These arms were smuggled into Sudan illegally. In addition, foreign countries sent the coupists $10 million in arms, which were smuggled into Sudan though certain Arab parties.

These sources stated that documents have been seized proving the complicity of certain Arab figures directly responsible for the coup attempt. These figures consider that the incumbent regime in Sudan constitutes a direct threat to their security and stability. The initial interrogation conducted with the leaders of the abortive coup attempt revealed that the organization "I Am Sudan" [Ana al-Sudan], led by retired Lieutenant General Fathi Ahmad 'Ali, former commander of the Sudanese Army, was behind the attempt. This is according to confessions by a number of the detained officers. The sources said that 13 officers and 10 retired officers have been detained for involvement in the abortive attempt. These officers tended to suport the dissolved al-Ummah Party and the Unionist Party. The interrogations, however, have not proven the complicity of former Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, as had been earlier reported.

The Sudanese sources disclosed that Arab Gulf parties provided the Sudanese opposition—that stands behind the coup attempts—with millions [currency not specified] and that the United Arab Emirates offered through Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan $5 million to the dissolved al-Ummah Party and $2 million to the Unionist Party. These sources also disclosed that the Unionist Party received several million during al-Mirghani's latest visit to Saudi Arabia following the pilgrimage season, particularly after the Unionist Party's account was frozen at the Egyptian Bank of Credit and Commerce International, al-Jizah branch, during the bank's recent crisis. The interrogation revealed that the military officers who sought to stage the coup received funds from certain unidentified foreign forces. [passage omitted]

Ramadan Welcomes Ties With Egypt, Saudis, U.S.

JN0809182291 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Text] Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has welcomed the possible restoration of ties between his country and Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United States. He said it is possible to resume ties with Egypt and Saudi Arabia based on joint Arab interests and affiliation to one [Arab] nation regardless of differences. He noted that what can apply to the Arab states also applies to the other powers with which Iraq severed diplomatic relations.

In an interview with the weekly MISR AL-FATAH to be published tomorrow, Ramadan welcomed President Mubarak's call for an end to the economic embargo on Iraq, describing it as a good act. Ramadan said, however, that the lifting of the embargo requires more than a public appeal or statement.

On why his country supported the putschists in the Soviet Union, the Iraqi vice president said: Iraq's position was not hostile to the Soviet Union. Iraq was voicing the hopes and wishes of every Arab that balance would be restored in international politics instead of leaving the United States to dispose of the fate of the entire world. He said that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's policy greatly harmed the Arab cause, showing subservience to the United States, Israel's natural and strategic ally.

In the interview, Ramadan criticized the U.S. Administration's demand for President Saddam Husayn's resignation, saying: If one-tenth of what happened in Iraq had taken place in New York, George Bush would not have remained U.S. President.

Ramadan criticized Turkey's occupation of part of Iraqi territory and said he expected high-level meetings between Iranian and Iraqi officials if positive results were the outcome of the talks between the under secretaries of the two countries' foreign ministries.

Saddam Receives Finance Minister on Pay Hikes

JN0709193591 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn received Finance Minister Majid 'Abd Ja'far and a number of experts this evening.

His excellency ordered that the salary and benefit increases decreed in Revolution Command Council [RCC] decision no. 343 dated 5 September 1991 be effective from 5 September 1991 and that the percentage of increases be calculated on the total, not the base salary, for all those individuals covered by the decision.

Leader President Saddam Husayn also ordered an amendment to job grades and to minimum and maximum salaries in keeping with these increases. He also ordered that those receiving only base pay, whether still on the job or already retired, be covered by the same increases. His excellency ordered that the necessary instructions be issued to facilitate the implementation of the decision by the competent authorities and that the payments be made on time.

Minister on Pay, Benefit Hikes

JN0609154191 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Finance Minister Majid 'Abd Ja'far said that the noble gesture of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn in ordering a pay or benefit raises for martyrs, the handicapped, military personnel, civil servants, and retirees reflects the leadership's concern for securing a decent living for the people of this country, notwithstanding the economic straits brought on by the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression and the sustained economic blockade.

He told INA the recent pay raise should, without a doubt, help enhance living standards and help the people cope with the hardships of the trade sanctions and the high rate of inflation, given the scarcity of goods and services. The structure, scale, and proportion of the recent pay raises take into account seniority, performance, the nature of the job, industriousness, responsible positions of leadership, and the responsibility of the community for the families of the revered martyrs. At the same time, the pay hikes give due attention to retirees who have served the community and the homeland, the minister added.

Although the pay increases strain the state budget, they reflect a concern on the part of leaders of the party and the revolution to raise the income of state officials in proportion to inflation and the rising cost of living.

The minister warned selfish, greedy traders against raising the prices of certain commodities, indicating that the state is serious about rectifying the imbalance between supply and demand by adopting a series of measures to protect the citizens and subsidize certain goods. He made it clear that departments in the ministry and other state agencies will take steps to implement the decision. These include instructions for the disbursement of payments to all beneficiaries of the decision.

Saddam Visits Culture, Information Ministry

JN0709120291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1200 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Sep (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has visited the Ministry of Culture and Information. The president was received and seen off by Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, minister of culture and information.

Oil Official on Export Capacity, Repair Work

JN0809112691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0848 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Sep (INA)—An Iraqi oil official has said that the capacity of export facilities via Turkey will reach 1.59 million barrels per day [bpd] by the end of next March. Ghazi Sabir 'Ali, director general of the Northern Oil Company, said that the second phase of the

repair work at the major pumping station linked with the exporting pipelines will be completed during the first quarter of next year.

The Iraqi technical teams have completed the first phase of the repair work at the station, thus allowing a current export capacity of 1.18 million bpd. 'Ali noted that the K-3 pumping station linking the southern oil fields with the exporting units in Karkuk via the strategic pipeline has become ready after completing repair work on 25 July.

Banker—'Foreign Parties' Behind Counterfeiting

JN0809093191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0636 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Sep (INA)—The governor of the Central Bank of Iraq has accused foreign parties of being behind the counterfeiting of Iraqi currency and of circulating it in local markets.

In an interview with the newspaper AL-QADISIYAH published today, Tariq al-Takamji did not identify these parties but said, however, that these parties are known to us. He said that the major objective of this campaign, which he termed a conspiracy, is to shake confidence in the legal Iraqi banknotes and undermine Iraq's economy by increasing prices by creating a higher demand for goods and services.

The Iraqi finance official refused to give details about the counterfeiting network. He said: We do not want to give details that might be useful to the concerned parties.

Al-Takamji reassured citizens that this issue is in the final stages of containment and that the security authorities, the Finance Ministry, and the Central Bank are making continuous and joint efforts to foil the conspiracy completely.

He said that the extent of circulation inside Iraq has been exaggerated, and that the dealers were not able to circulate more than a few thousand banknotes.

The Central Bank of Iraq governor refuted rumors about the lack of cover for the recently printed banknotes, saying: All the 25-, 50-, and 100-dinar notes have been issued in accordance with the Central Bank law just as other notes that were printed outside Iraq, and that they are covered and legal.

Al-Takamji spoke about the opening of hard currency current accounts in Iraqi banks. He said: Every Iraqi citizen can open an account in hard currency. He is also free to dispose of his money, to import, or to transfer money wholly or partially to cover his personal needs, or to other sides abroad.

He noted that any Iraqi who obtains an import license from the Trade Ministry in hard currency will be authorized to take out a sum of money equivalent to the sum [included in the import license] across Iraq's border without being questioned about the source or about how it entered Iraq.

RCC Measure on Property Grants to Military

JN0809150791 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has issued a decision releasing grants intended for the military in accordance with the Law of Conveyance of Property to the Military and the Families of Army Martyrs No. 43 of 1979. Following is the text of the decision:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The RCC. Decision No. 314, dated 22 Safar 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 1 September 1991. Decision:

Based on paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

1. Grants intended for the military in accordance with the provisions of the Law of Conveyance of Property to the Military and the Families of Army Martyrs No. 43 of 1979 shall be released.

2. The competent ministers and concerned quarters shall implement this decision.

[Signed] RCC Chairman Saddam Husayn.

The RCC has also issued a decision amending the Law of Conveyance of Property to the Military and the Families of Army Martyrs No. 43 of 1979. The following is the text of the decision:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. In the name of the people.

The RCC. Decision No. 313, dated 22 Safar 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 1 September 1991.

Based on paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided to issue Law No. 29 of 1991—Law Amending the Law of Conveyance of Property to the Military and the Families of Army Martyrs No. 43 of 1979.

Article I. The figure "5,000" mentioned in paragraph 1 of Article IV of the Law of Conveyance of Property to the Military and the Families of Army Martyrs No. 43 of 1979 shall be deleted and replaced by "6,000 dinars."

Article II. The competent ministers and concerned quarters shall implement the provisions of this law.

[Signed] RCC Chairman Saddam Husayn

Hammadi Says Israel Will Get U.S. Guarantees

JN0709140291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1258 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Sep (INA)—Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi believes that Israel will get the $10 billion from the United States.

In a statement to INA, he described Israel's official demand for this amount from the U.S. Government as an open challenge to President Bush, who asked Tel Aviv not to ask for the money for the time being and who had

earlier said that he would ask Congress to postpone discussion on the matter for four months.

He stressed that Bush's position will not change anything nor prevent Israel from getting the money. He added that neither Bush nor Congress can reject Tel Aviv's demand or even level objective criticism of the Israeli Government.

Hamid Yusuf Hammadi asserted that Israel would get the money whether Bush objects to or approves of the demand, pointing to the facts that govern the American President's position on Israel's demand, including the fact that Bush is preparing himself for a new election campaign. He said that Bush, who is known to be a practical man, cannot face the lobby that is hostile to the Arabs, just as he could not face it at the beginning of his term. A confrontation of this sort, he said, would go against Bush's nature and beliefs.

The culture and information minister drew attention to the U.S. Administration's deception of the Arab nation, now that the United States dominates the world situation. He said that Bush has tried to appear to have his own views, while Israel's reply represents one of the results of the new world order and its indifference to Arab governments.

He also denounced the reaction of Arab rulers, who are being manipulated by the White House, and said that the Arabs of America, who are investing hundreds of billions of dollars of Arab money in U.S. banks, will also seek to win Israel's favor.

Hamid Yusuf Hammadi also commented on UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's statements that he would recommend to the Security Council to approve an increase in the amount of oil Iraq can export in accordance with the French plan.

The culture and information minister added that the siege on the Iraqi people for more than one year, and denying them medicine, are crimes that will never be forgiven by history; these crimes are a disgrace to those who sought or supported them. He said that the Iraqi people do not care about recommendations by Perez de Cuellar or others because Iraq has always been right, and that those who support Zionism and aggression are in the camp of infidelity and falsehood.

Inspection Leader Cites 'Lack of Certain Things'

NC0909102091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0855 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 9 Sep (MENA)—Johan Santesson, head of the fourth UN team inspecting Iraq's chemical installations, and his 26-member delegation left Baghdad this morning for Bahrain.

In a predeparture statement to the MENA correspondent in Baghdad, Santesson said he would spend a few days in Bahrain drafting a report on his team's findings and then go on to New York to submit this report to the head of the UN special committee.

Asked about the meeting he and his team's members held yesterday with the Iraqi side, Santesson said it focused on certain final clarifications he needed for the report.

Santesson responded affirmatively when asked whether there would be further inspections of Iraq's chemical installations, but added that he did not know when the next team would arrive, because the visits are arranged by the head of the UN special committee.

Santesson further told the MENA correspondent that his team could not complete its inspection of Iraq's declared sites because of a "lack of certain things"—which he did not specify—he said were necessary for the team to complete its mission. He noted that his team inspected seven or eight installations and examined Iraq's chemical ammunitions at three of these sites where it found their numbers to be identical to the numbers previously declared by Iraq. [passage omitted]

'Something' Discovered

NC0609204291 Paris AFP in English 2008 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, Sep 6 (AFP)—International experts inspecting Iraq's chemical weapons capability said Friday they had discovered "something," but will temporarily withhold details for bureaucratic reasons. "We have found something which we will have to consider and discuss a little bit," said Johan Santessos, the head of the U.N. chemical weapons inspection team to Iraq.

Meanwhile, a new team of ballistic experts arrived in Iraq Friday for a week-long visit to inspect missile-launching sites. "We are going to inspect the sites of the western zone where they have the fixed structure for launchers," team leader Tom Brock said.

Santessos said details had to be withheld until he refers the issue to Rolf Ekeus, head of the United Nations mission charged with disarming Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war.

"I cannot elaborate. He (Ekeus) should hear the report from me, not the newspapers," said Santessos, a Swede. "I sincerely hope that, at present, they have declared all their possessions" regarding chemical weapons, he added.

Santessos said his team of 26 members is to leave Iraq on Sunday after a nine-day mission to visit various sites in a bid to verify Iraqi statements about chemical weapons. So far, six or seven have been visited. Another chemical weapons inspection team of 10 members led by Canadian James Knapp arrived in Iraq on the same day as Santessos' group, but left Iraq Thursday after having supervised the destruction of chemical arms. These two groups are the fourth and fifth U.N. missions to Iraq since the special disarmament committee was formed in April.

The 17-member team inspecting the launching sites is due to begin work Saturday. It is the fourth ballistic mission since the U.N. committee was formed. It comes two months after a preceding team announced destruction of 61 missiles declared by Iraq, including one Scud.

A ballistic team that was here in August inspected the so-called supergun, which Iraq in July claimed to have tested. Brock did not say whether his team would inspect the supergun.

Kurdish Source Says Baghdad Talks at 'Dead End'

NC0909064491 Paris AFP in English 0605 GMT 9 Sep 91

[By Elias Tohme]

[Text] Damascus, Sept 9 (AFP)—Negotiations between Iraq and Kurdish representatives to secure autonomy for Iraqi Kurdistan and greater democracy for the entire country, have reached a dead end, a senior Kurdish source said here.

The talks that began four months ago after a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq "are limping along but have made no progress ... even if the dialogue is continuing," a source representing the Kurdistan Front told AFP here on condition that he not be named.

The Front, an eight-party coalition of Iraqi Kurdish groups, has been speaking for Iraqi Kurdistan in talks with Baghdad authorities aimed at ending more than 20 years of clashes between Kurdish rebels and government forces.

"The Iraqi regime is not prepared to accept the Kurdish plan for democracy, civil rights, the constitution and autonomy" for Kurdistan, the source charged. He said the Front was convinced that "the realization of the legitimate rights of the Kurdish people can only come about under a democratic regime. "If the regime persists in its stubbornness and in its rejection, the talks will go nowhere." But he acknowledged that some "positive but insufficient" points had been raised in the talks.

Iraqi leaders, for example, had put forward "certain new points" concerning democracy and a multiparty system at a recent encounter with the Front. The last meeting took place August 24 at Shaqlawah in Iraq.

The source would not disclose the nature of the new factors and said the Front had yet to take a final position on the question. But he noted that Iraqi authorities had refused to approve political parties with a confessional basis.

Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, the highest decision-making body in the country, last Monday promulgated a law on the creation of new parties, except for those motivated by religious confession, region or race.

While the measure would enable parties to publish newspapers, it banned all direct or indirect links to foreign states.

Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan and a key Kurdish leader, has denounced the new party law as a blueprint for the suppression of opposition movements in Iraq. He likewise warned of a fresh assault by Iraqi forces on Kurdish positions in the north and appealed to Western leaders to keep an eye on the activities of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

Iraqi opposition sources in the Syrian capital have also dismissed the law, warning that it "will not only prevent the creation of new parties but will abolish those that have existed for decades."

Karkuk Residents Allowed To Return

JN0709195891 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Following great efforts by the militant Kurdistan Front through the coordination committee, and after the removal of difficulties facing the migrating masses of Karkuk, it has been decided that the masses that left for al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate and other regions of Kurdistan will return in groups to their areas and families in Karkuk Governorate. The first group comprises 529 families, with a total number of 3,415 family members.

It has also been decided that these families will be given assistance in living accommodations, finances, and supplies. They will also be respected and appreciated.

There is no doubt that the decision to return the migrating masses of Karkuk is respected and appreciated by all the Kurdish people, because this will save the Karkuk masses from expatriation and from living away from their families.

Attacks on Areas in Kurdistan Reported

NC0809174591 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1703 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] At a time when the Iraqi people are suffering from so many ordeals and disasters, when Iraqi children are craving milk, and when millions of people are suffering from hunger and severe social collapse [words indistinct], the Iraqi Government is assembling thousands of soldiers [words indistinct] heavy weapons in various parts of Kurdistan, particularly in Karkuk and (?adjacent areas) for reasons that are too well-known. According to a report by [words indistinct] of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], on 7 September two Iraqi helicopters bombed PUK peshmergas and helpless civilians in the village of [name indistinct]. On the night of 7 and 8 September, heavy artillery stationed in the [name indistinct] camp bombarded the area of [name indistinct] and adjacent areas. At the time of filing this report, the artillery bombardment was still in progress.

Details of Request for Loan Guarantees Reported

TA0709203891 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1925 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Zalman Shoval, Israeli ambassador to Washington, yesterday submitted to Secretary of State James Baker Israel's official request for loan guarantees from the U.S. Administration. An addendum by Prime Minister Shamir was attached to the request clarifying that the loan guarantees are needed to establish employment for the immigrants and help them with housing and mortgages. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik has received the full text of Israel's request and he reports the main details:

Israel will absorb 1 million immigrants within the next five years. That is the figure quoted by the prime minister and finance minister in their request for loan guarantees. The document reviews the good relations between the two countries and the fact that Israel had always repaid its debts on time. The request includes a report on economic plans that have already been implemented and an implicit, undetailed promise that the government will continue to move toward a freer economy and greater privatization. There is a promise that budgetary discipline will be observed. Further down, the costs of immigrant absorption are specified along with mention of the estimable moral values that guide the United States and obligate it to assist this great humanitarian endeavor. The document states that the loans will be invested only in economically fruitful assets and will not be consumed by daily expenses, but does not give details explaining what will be done with the money.

The document reiterates—and this is currently the heart of the disagreement—Israel's previous commitment that the money will not be invested beyond the 1967 borders. This is the clause that does not satisfy President Bush. He wants a commitment to freeze any settlement beyond the Green Line. The Israeli Government refuses to accede to this demand, and Secretary of State Baker has proposed deferring the request to preclude an immediate, direct confrontation between President Bush and Prime Minister Shamir.

On instructions from Foreign Minister Levi, Zalman Shoval, our ambassador to Washington, warned James Baker that if the United States does not help Israel immediately, the country's current economic efforts, undertaken with U.S. assistance, could suffer great damage.

The cabinet will debate the crisis surrounding the loan guarantees at next Wednesday's [11 September] session, after the holiday.

Following his meeting with Baker, Ambassador Shoval yesterday canceled a planned news conference to avoid what he called unnecessary tension with the U.S. Administration. Shoval made these statements after President Bush yesterday took the unprecedented step of summoning correspondents to his office in the White House to explain his reasons for opposing granting Israel the loan guarantees at this time.

Shamir Foresees No Major Clash With U.S.

TA0609122191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] In a special interview on the occasion of the Jewish New Year, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir states that he believes Israel is not on the brink of a major confrontation with the United States over the loan guarantees, although this is one of the issues in dispute between us and the Americans. Nevertheless, the prime minister hopes Israel will overcome the obstacles and continue to cooperate with the United States. Our political correspondent Arye Golan asked the prime minister to comment on the fact that the chairman of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee agreed to postpone a debate on the guarantees at the request of the administration.

[Begin recording] [Shamir] One cannot draw any conclusions from reports that are only a minute, an hour, or a day old. This is a process, and I think that there is firm recognition in U.S. society and in all sectors of the administration that the United States owes this aid to the great enterprise of absorbing immigrants. We disagree on the timing and the way to go about it, and we will have to overcome these disagreements.

[Golan] People say that Bush and Baker have no sentiments toward the Jewish people, that they are cold people whose actions are guided by self-interest. Do you share this view?

[Shamir] Well, it is not up to me to agree with such descriptions. We work with the United States and with the officials acting in its name.

[Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, will the government go on building settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, even if the Americans shut all or some of the taps?

[Shamir] There is a great deal of exaggeration on the entire settlement issue. Clearly, any Israeli Government will not prevent Israelis from leading a normal life in all parts of Eretz Yisra'el. [end recording]

Rejects Linking Guarantees, Peace

TA0809121891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Special Rosh Hashanah interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent Arye Golan; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Shamir] We reject the concept of linkage [previous word in English here and elsewhere in the interview] and we always will. We reject the idea of any provisos attached to humanitarian assistance of the highest moral order, or any connections between such assistance and any sort of political moves that could be a subject of disagreement. We do not accept that. Yet,

naturally, after we rejected the U.S. Government's request not to submit the request and actually submitted it, the entire matter lies in the hands of the U.S. Administration and Congress. They can make whatever decision they deem fit; I hope their decision will suit our cause as well.

[Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, Israel has asked Secretary of State Baker to postpone his visit until after Yom Kippur [18 September]. Is this some kind of signal on your part saying that if guarantees can be postponed...?

[Shamir, interrupting] We did not ask. Someone—the ambassador—said that technically, practically, it is not a good idea to come a day before Yom Kippur, because everyone is liable to be a bit tense at such a time. There is no political significance to this. We did not ask for a postponement, and we are ready to receive Secretary Baker whenever he comes.

[Golan] One press report quotes you as saying that if there are no guarantees, there may be no conference either.

[Shamir] No, I said that, objectively, the creation of linkage can jeopardize the nature of the peace process. Why? Because the moment the Arabs receive this unexpected and unsolicited gift....[changes thought] You know, the Arabs have presented the U.S. Government with many demands, which are preconditions they want to achieve before a peace process is launched. Yet they have never demanded that the United States revoke loan guarantees. If they are granted this, they will be ecstatic with joy, and the level of their demands will soar. This very fact will suppress the peace process.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1100 GMT on 8 September, in a report on the same interview by Jack Katzenell, adds: "Asked for his reaction to the suggestion that the United States provide some tens of millions of dollars in interim aid until the loan guarantees are approved, Shamir replied: We will not haggle with the Americans over this, but the offer shows that their attitude to the absorption of Soviet immigrants is a positive one. It proves once again their recognition that they have a moral obligation to give Israel this aid.

["Shamir reaffirmed that if the problem of Palestinian representation is not solved, Israel will not attend the regional conference. That is what I told Secretary Baker, Shamir said, and the Americans did not oppose this. There is complete agreement between us on this issue. Since Secretary Baker did not obtain the agreement of the Arabs during his last visit, Shamir said, the matter remains hanging in the air.

["Asked about a possible freeze in settlements, Shamir said: It is not true that this is the key to progress in the peace process, as some people claim. Nobody has asked us for such a freeze, he said. We did not accept any linkage, not with the problem of settlements, and not with other political problems.

["Asked if there are plans to establish new settlements, Shamir said he did not know the precise plans of the Housing Ministry, but that was not the main thing. What really counts, Shamir said, is that the population of Israel is expanding, and it will expand in those areas also. He was happy that the Jewish population had passed the 4 million mark, and hoped that in the coming year it would approach 5 million."]

Issue Might Affect Peace Process

TA0609175791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent Shlomo Ganor; on 6 September, place not given—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, is Israel on a collision course with the U.S. Administration concerning the guarantees?
[Shamir] No. Please do not dramatize the issue. We have certain disagreements, but we are not on any collision course.

[Ganor] Will we pledge not to use the funds to set up settlements?
[Shamir] We normally pledge not to use the funds we get from the United States in areas which are not part of a framework acceptable to the United States.

[Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, do you believe that eventually the guarantees will be provided?
[Shamir] I hope so.

[Ganor] And if not, will it have an effect on the very participation of Israel in the peace conference?
[Shamir] As Secretary Baker said, everything has an effect. This might have an effect as well.

[Ganor] Can I gather from your remark that Israel is making its participation in the peace conference conditional....
[Shamir, interrupting] No, no, there is no such condition. We have made no such condition. Objectively, however, this does not help. Primarily, it makes the Arab positions more extreme, tougher, and we can all guess the results.

[Ganor] So do you believe it will have an effect on the peace process?
[Shamir] It might.

[Ganor] In what way?
[Shamir] I have already told you.

[Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, thank you and a happy new year.
[Shamir] Happy new year.

Aide Rejects Bush's Call To Defer Guarantees

TA0709054091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] A top aide to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has rejected U.S. President George Bush's call to Congress to defer by 120 days consideration of the $10 billion loan guarantees to Israel.

Yosi Ahime'ir said last night there was no connection between the absorption of Soviet immigrants and the peace process. He said the remaining obstacle to a Middle East peace conference is the makeup of the Palestinian delegation and not the loan guarantees. Ahime'ir said he hoped the issue would be resolved without confrontation between Israel and the United States.

Israel's ambassador in Washington, Zalman Shoval, said yesterday before Bush's remarks that he was sure the U.S. Administration would not want Soviet Jews to be prisoners of Arab pressures. He said he was encouraged by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's statement that the United States was committed to helping Israel absorb Soviet immigrants. Shoval went ahead last night and presented the request to U.S. officials.

Our reporter in Washington says the United States has proposed several temporary solutions to Israel's absorption needs. One of the proposals is that Israel will receive tens of millions of dollars from the United States in additional foreign aid while it waits out the 120 days.

Political Level 'Does Not Reject' Interim Aid

TA0809184691 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] The political echelon in Israel does not reject the compromise the U.S. Administration is now proposing, whereby Israel will receive interim aid for aliyah absorption until the issue of the guarantees Israel has requested can be fully discussed and endorsed. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that at the same time Israel intends to wage an immediate struggle in the U.S. Congress to win approval for the guarantees despite the U.S. Administration's opposition. The assessment is that the Americans are putting off the discussion of aid to Israel to make it easier to obtain Arab agreements, which will finally lead to a peace conference.

In the meantime, no announcement has been made on a change in Secretary Baker's intention to arrive in Israel next Monday.

During a toast for Rosh Hashanah at the Likud's branch in Jerusalem today, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir declared anew that all parts of Eretz Yisra'el should be increasingly populated by Jews.

Moda'i Confident of Loan Guarantees

TA0809082991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Telephone interview with Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i by Uri Paz and Gilat Levi—live]

[Excerpts] [Paz] Good morning, Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i.

[Moda'i] Good morning, and a happy new year.

[Paz] And to you. There is talk of interim solutions, one of which is interim financing. Do you accept that as a possible solution that will enable Israel to weather the current crisis in Israeli-U.S. relations over the loan guarantees?

[Moda'i] I know nothing of interim financing. Like you people, I heard it from unauthorized sources. I find it very difficult to guess what that means. Our request did not refer to financing, to money only; we need to be certain that we can secure the full amount we require over five years—at least as far as the American part, which is quite considerable, is involved.

[Levi] They say in Washington that President Bush is angry that the guarantees were made part of the state budget even before Congressional approval. Could it have been a mistake to include them in the budget before they were approved by the Americans?

[Moda'i] A Latin adage says that when a person is angry, he is probably wrong. We wanted to submit our request in the course of the Gulf war. The administration, at the suggestion of President Bush, asked us to postpone the request until the Friday following Labor Day—which we did. It is obvious that not only is it permissible for us to submit the request now, but it will be almost certainly approved.

We may make as many different presumptions as we like in our state budget. Even the budget of the great United States is based on various presumptions regarding different economic and international political moves. We did the same, and I hope we did not err.

[Paz] Is it possible that Israel will prefer to drop the issue of guarantees rather than make a commitment to stop settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza? I am asking that because you are a political figure, as well as the finance minister.

[Moda'i] There is no connection between the two.

[Paz] The connection has been noted.

[Moda'i] Even the U.S. Government has said there is no connection between the two: Secretary of State Baker has said so. We—or rather you in the media—are the only ones who have been insisting on establishing such a link.

[Paz] The link between the political process and the guarantees was noted by President Bush, too.

[Moda'i] That is true. For some time—in the past week—President Bush has been noted to observe a link between the political process and the issue of guarantees, but that still does not lead us in a straight line to the issue of settlement. People may harbor all kinds of thoughts, but I suggest that we stop making the wildest guesses about what others think, always assuming the worst for us.

[Paz] We are only quoting others. Baker, too, said they would like to help immigrant absorption, but now is not the time for argument, and there is no need for such a thing to spoil an atmosphere that has improved recently.

[Moda'i] True, he said so, but where do you detect a mention of settlements or the political issue in those remarks?

[Paz] The political issue was mentioned....

[Moda'i, interrupting] The political issue was mentioned by the President, who sees a link. I have even read rumors that the Syrians had received advance commitments to that effect. I do not know anything for a fact, with the exception of one thing: The President asked that the debate on this issue be postponed, and he is trying to persuade congressmen to adopt his approach. As yet, however, no one knows what the outcome will be.

[Paz] In any event, you see no politicization of the guarantees issue?

[Moda'i] I did not say that. All I said was that the guarantees are a humanitarian issue of the first order, and our request is financial, not political.

[Levi] If the guarantees are delayed, will Israel be liable to quit the peace process?

[Moda'i] No, I see no such connection. Israel initiated the two-track peace conference, and it is hard to imagine that the country that initiated the process and made great efforts to bring it to fruition would withdraw.

In a similar vein, however, I do not see how the United States of America, whose leaders have repeatedly declared its commitment to assist the absorption of immigrants—the most recent such declaration was made yesterday by the U.S. ambassador to Israel—I do not see how it can link this humanitarian issue, to which it has proclaimed moral and other commitments, with any sort of process.

[Levi] Will a delay in the approval of guarantees result in a tax hike here?

[Moda'i] No, as I have stated unequivocally. I do not know who keeps raising that idea. The concept of increasing taxes is the very antithesis of accelerated development. [passage omitted]

[Paz] Mr. Moda'i, how do you think Israel will emerge from this crisis in the end? Will we receive the guarantees in the near future, or will we be forced to wait 120 days?

[Moda'i] My assessment is that, first of all, we will certainly, or almost certainly, receive the guarantees we have requested. They are not a grant or a loan; they are not even the writing off of a debt. The issue at stake is a mere guarantee which costs nothing, or almost nothing, to the U.S. budget. The second point is that for the sake of our planning ability and for the sake of our ability to make safe assumptions, I would very much like the guarantees for $10 billion over five years to be approved as soon as possible. The third point is that if a there is a postponement for any reason at all, and if we can be assured that at the end of the postponement period the guarantees will be approved, we will have to plan and prepare accordingly. All in all, I do not see this as a crisis, only as a difficulty presented by the U.S. Administration for reasons of its own. I assume we will overcome it.

[Paz] Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i, on this optimistic note, we will wish you a happy new year.

[Moda'i] A happy new year to you, to the entire nation, and to the Israeli soldiers and their families.

Bank Head—Backing Needed as Sign of Confidence

TA0609185791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Interview with Professor Ya'aqov Frankel, Bank of Israel governor, "who is leaving for the United States in the middle of next week," by economic correspondent 'Oded Shahar, on 6 September in Frankel's office—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Shahar] Mr. Governor, can Israel do without the U.S. guarantees?

[Frankel] The U.S. guarantees are very essential for the success of the absorption of immigrants here. Without them, Israel will have to take loans in tight world markets and will have to pay much higher interest rates than it would pay otherwise. In addition, since eventually the State of Israel will have to take higher loans than what it currently requests, we will be missing the important signal of the U.S. Government: Through the guarantees the United States will be signaling to world markets that it has confidence in Israel's economy and economic policy.

[Shahar] Will the government have to impose, reluctantly perhaps, taxes and economic constraints on the Israeli public?

[Frankel] Without the guarantees and with our well known difficulties, naturally the absorption of this immigration wave will be more difficult and, God forbid, there could be fewer immigrants. I believe that taxes must not be imposed, especially not on the business sector. The solution for the problem of absorption is the renewal of growth. There is nothing that damages growth more than taxes. [passage omitted]

On Impact of Delay in Guarantees

TA0609065091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Professor Ya'aqov Frankel, governor of the Bank of Israel, has said that Israel should immediately proceed to implement an economic policy that will make the economy immune to a delay of a few months in the granting of the U.S. loan guarantees for immigrant absorption. At the same time, Prof. Frankel stressed, a brief postponement will not have an immediate impact because aliyah, investment, and financing are lengthy processes.

Interviewed by Qol Yisra'el, Prof. Frankel said that Israel must promote privatization in order to portray itself as a country in which it is good to do business. Israel will have a problem if it is not given the guarantees, because the loans it will need to raise in world markets will carry high interest rates; on the other hand, the granting of the guarantees will prove to the world that Israel's economy is strong.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 6 September cites high-ranking Treasury sources in Jerusalem as saying that "if Israel is denied the loan guarantees it is seeking from the United States, it will have to restructure large parts of the state budget. Nevertheless, the sources believe that Israel will ultimately be granted the loan guarantees."]

Further Reactions to Bush Moves on Guarantees

TA0809101391

[Editorial Report] All Israeli newspapers on 8 September provide full coverage of reactions in Jerusalem to President Bush's efforts to delay Congressional consideration of Israel's request for loan guarantees.

Writing on page 1 of Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English, Michal Yudelman and Allison Kaplan quote sources close to the prime minister as stating yesterday that "Prime Minister Shamir intends to avoid a showdown with the United States over the peace process before meeting Secretary of State James Baker, who is due to arrive either on September 16 or after Yom Kippur."

The report adds: "Bush's demand to postpone the guarantees to Israel 'will not have an impact on Israel's stand vis-a-vis the peace process,' one source stressed. 'After all, if we are the ones insisting that there is no linkage between the guarantees and the peace process, we can hardly let the issue affect our position. We hope that Bush will not go too far in his attempt to link the two issues.'"

The report goes on to say: "In calling on Congress to put off consideration of the aid just hours before Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval submitted the formal request, Bush has turned the issue into the largest public showdown between a U.S. president and Israel since the 1981 battle with the Reagan administration over the sale of Awacs radar planes to Saudi Arabia.

"This confrontation was reflected by one Jerusalem source, who said: 'The more trouble the Americans give us, the tougher Israel's stand on the memorandum of understanding concerning the peace process will become. By openly conditioning the financial guarantees on the peace process, the U.S. is in effect turning us into captives of the peace process.

"'Now that the cat is out of the bag, Israel might insist on every possible political guarantee about Palestinian representation at the conference. We've already postponed asking for the guarantees once, at U.S. urging, and the request to delay them further shows that the Americans can't be trusted.'"

Further on the report states: "Sources in Jerusalem estimated that Bush's linkage would not be accepted in the Congress. 'Financial aid for aliya absorption is a humanitarian issue, and the American spirit and ethos will not allow using it as a lever to pressure Israel on political matters,' one said."

The report concludes: "The sources noted that the only thing now holding up peace talks is the issue of the Palestinian delegation. 'The Americans have accepted Israel's conditions on the composition of the Palestinian delegation, and since there has been no progress in forming such a delegation, Israel cannot be blamed for holding up the peace process,' one source explained.

"Another source noted that 'the memorandum of understanding may not be relevant any more, and it is possible that the Americans will simply send letters to both sides, presenting its position, and make do with that.'

"But Shamir is now facing internal pressures to change his position. The Eretz Yisra'el Front, some 30 Likud and right-wing MKs [Knesset members], yesterday demanded that he reconsider his stand on participation in the peace conference."

A report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef and 'Oded Shorer on pages A1 and A2 of Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew notes that the United States has offered interim funding to Israel that would actually "cover the difference between the low-interest loans for which Israel is seeking guarantees from Washington and ordinary bank loans." Reacting to this compromise proposal, made by Secretary Baker in the meeting with Ambassador Shoval, political sources in Jerusalem said "it does not satisfy Israel."

Another conciliatory gesture proposed by the United States is to lead the effort to abolish the 1975 UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. Nevertheless, MA'ARIV notes, "an atmosphere of crisis prevails in Jerusalem in the wake of the extraordinary news conference called by President Bush to voice his categorical

demand that Congress put off its debate on the guarantees. Prime Minister Shamir held high-level consultations last night to examine the repercussions of the expected confrontation.

"A political source said that the administration's conduct was a blunt effort to exploit the humanitarian aid needed for immigrant absorption to pressure Israel on the peace negotiations.

"The source added that Israel had given in to the administration on two previous occasions this year: when it refrained from retaliating for the Scuds fired from Iraq, and when it agreed to put off the presentation of its request for guarantees until September."

MA'ARIV points out that "Israel has proposed to the U.S. secretary of state that he put off his visit to Israel until after Yom Kippur to allow for comfortable discussions without any time pressures."

A report by Hemi Shalev, Drora Perl, and Hagay Porshner on pages 1 and 2 of Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew adds: "Prime Minister Shamir has threatened that Israel will not participate in the peace conference if the U.S. Administration persists in attaching political conditions to the Israeli request for loan guarantees.

"In a meeting with a visiting Dutch parliamentary delegation on Friday, Shamir said that if the administration creates a linkage between the political process and the guarantees, the peace process will be either postponed or scrapped altogether." The paper notes that the prime minister's bureau did not release a statement to the press about the meeting.

Sources in Jerusalem believe that during his upcoming visit to Israel "Secretary Baker will try to minimize the confrontation between Jerusalem and Washington." DAVAR notes that, according to information reaching Jerusalem, "Egyptian President Husni Mubarak played a key role in the hardening of the U.S. position toward Israel. Mubarak recently sent messages to the U.S. Administration stating that the granting of the guarantees without any mention of the question of the settlements would seriously sabotage the Arab countries' faith in Washington's ability to play the role of 'honest broker' in the political negotiations. It has also been learned that several European leaders had been urging the President to use the guarantees to reduce or stop settlement in the territories.

"Reacting to those reports, sources close to the prime minister said that if the administration has so completely given in to Arab and European pressure, even before the peace talks started, Israel will have to be ten times more cautious about its very participation in the process."

Writing on page 2 of Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew, Tzvi Gilat quotes one of Shamir's aides as saying that the prime minister "took hard" the President's demand to Congress. Other aides mentioned a possible postponement of the peace conference, "not, God forbid, because of the guarantees, but because there has been no progress on the question of the Palestinian representation. 'Baker was here a month ago, and nothing has changed since then. Those portraying settlement as an obstacle are trying to mislead the public. The crux of the matter remains the composition of the Palestinian delegation, and Israel will not give up its demands on the issue,' one aide is quoted as saying.

"Hence, when he comes to Jerusalem next week, Baker will be in for some tough and caustic talks with Shamir. It has been reported in recent weeks that the United States will not give the sides a memorandum of understanding prior to the conference, and it seems that in the upcoming talks Shamir will adopt a tough line. As far as he is concerned, stopping settlement at this time would be a clear sign of capitulation to the Arab demands, which would trigger additional and tougher demands.

"Officials in the prime minister's bureau were also suspicious of the President's request to put off a Congressional debate by 120 days and said that 120 days could become six months or even longer. They added that 'an attempt is under way to turn Israel into a hostage to progress in the peace process.' Yosi Ahime'ir, head of Shamir's bureau, said: 'At the moment, the only thing being done in the territories is the expansion of existing settlements, and no new settlements are in the works. Nobody plans to do anything to spite the Americans, but, obviously, no freeze whatsoever will be imposed on settlement. The obstacle is not settlement.'"

A footnote by correspondent Moshe Perl adds that some "Likud members are demanding that the prime minister's bureau be transferred to East Jerusalem and that cabinet sessions be held there in view of Baker's plans to meet Palestinian delegates in East Jerusalem. This weekend MK 'Uzi Landau called on the government to make such a decision as early as in its upcoming meeting."

A report by Hayim Shibi and Roni Shaqed on page 2 of Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew notes that Palestinians in the territories have voiced their "satisfaction" with President Bush's decision to ask Congress to put off the debate on Israel's request for loan guarantees. "Bush's move proves that the United States takes the peace process seriously," Sa'id Kan'an of Nabulus is quoted as saying.

Shamir on Peace Process, Settlements

TA0809094591 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (ROSH HASAHANA supplement) in Hebrew 8 Sep 91 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by editor in chief 'Ido Dissentchik in Shamir's office in Jerusalem; date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Dissentchik] Will there be a peace conference?

[Shamir] I believe so.

[Dissentchik] What is your estimate of the timetable?

[Shamir] It can be soon. I see no particular reasons that could delay the beginning of the process, unless something unexpected happens. The way things look now, it can take place in a few weeks—a month or two—something like that.

[Dissentchik] What is your feeling about the chances of the process progressing in the future, if it starts?

[Shamir] Primarily, I attribute great importance to the start itself. I think that is desirable, and I think the fact that bilateral, direct peace negotiations between Israel and the Arab world has started will have historic significance for the future. Future developments and their sequence are a different thing. Of course, we will have to see to it that the results are positive, but if that does not happen, or if the conference is later delayed, the very start is important.

[Dissentchik] From what you are saying, I gather that you can see the first step, but that you are not certain that you can or want to foresee how it will develop?

[Shamir] Who is so wise as to know all that? After all, we in the Middle East are in a constant state of instability. We are involved with many international bodies. The Arab world—which is the partner for the process—is full of inner conflicts, of contradictions. That is why the very beginning of the process is so important; it means we will have overcome all the obstacles. Nevertheless, who can anticipate and foresee exactly what will happen after it starts?

[Dissentchik] Do you foresee possible conflicts between us and the Americans even before the process starts?

[Shamir] Everything is possible. It is well known that we do not see eye to eye with the United States on all of our problems, not even the central problems of our national situation. Differences of opinion are legitimate; they must not immediately turn into conflicts. There are still disagreements, but we are trying to overcome them and move forward.

[Dissentchik] You are saying that there are differences between us and the Americans concerning main issues of our national situation; what do you mean?

[Shamir] For example, we sit here in Jerusalem. This is an issue in dispute, serious dispute. For us it is a matter of consensus; they, however, until this day have not recognized West Jerusalem as a part of Israel. Another example: Israel's borders are an issue of deep dispute between us and the Americans. On the other hand, however, through the years we have lived well with those conflicts, and we still do. We decided jointly to postpone settling the disputes because, in the meantime, we had important things that we thought we should do together. It is possible that the same will happen in the future.

[Dissentchik] What about the price we are paying—and there is a price—for the policy of settlement? Should Israel pay it? Is it worth our while?

[Shamir] What is the price?

[Dissentchik] A price—here and there a friction; here a yell, there an outcry; conditions being placed on guarantees for immigrant absorption.

[Shamir] The settlements are a part of the territorial differences between us and the Arab world, and between us and several international bodies, including the United States. I do not regard settlement as a major thing. It is a natural thing. When we set up a settlement or expand an existing one, it is natural; we are doing things the way we see fit. The land belongs to us.

[Dissentchik] Meaning that you believe that even if there is a price to pay, it is worth it?

[Shamir] There is nothing else we can do. We have to settle Israel. We have to bring in Jews. They, however, tell us that we must not even bring Jews here. They oppose aliyah. So what? Is there a price for that as well?

[Dissentchik] I am not referring to the price to pay the Arabs. I am speaking of the price we pay the rest of the world, the Arabs excluded.

[Shamir] The world cannot force us to do things we oppose. These are matters of principle. If we agreed today not to settle any more, it would mean giving up on those territories. That is how the Arabs and others would understand it. [passage omitted]

Levi Promises Continued Cooperation in Process

TA0709172791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has instructed Israel's ambassador to Washington to state that Israel promises to continue to work together with Secretary of State Baker to promote the political process. This was reported by our correspondent Arye Golan.

At a meeting with Likud supporters, Levi said that Israel does not want a confrontation with the U.S. Administration over the loan guarantees and that the United States is not hostile. For that reason, harmful and unnecessary statements against the United States should be avoided.

A Foreign Ministry official in Jerusalem told correspondents that the foreign minister had expressed concern over the future of aliyah if the United States does not endorse the loan guarantees for immigrant absorption.

Arens on Security, U.S. Relations

TA0709120391 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0905 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Mikha Friedman; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Friedman] What sort of year have you just had, Mr. Arens?

[Arens] It was full of events, not all anticipated. I am, of course, referring to the Gulf war and everything connected to it. It was also a year of achievements, of Operation Solomon. In general, it was an interesting year. I remember the Chinese curse: May you live in interesting times. [passage omitted]

[Friedman] Would you say that after all the events of this year, Israel and its inhabitants are more secure?

[Arens] I would not say they are more secure. As you know, we presented the government with very large budgetary demands during difficult economic times, because it is clear to us that the large number of missiles in the Middle East and the efforts by the Arab states to secure nonconventional weapons—they already have chemical weapons, but they also desire a nuclear capability—might expose us to previously nonexistent dangers. We must therefore be prepared.

[Friedman] Including against a nuclear danger?

[Arens] There are those who say it is only a question of time before nuclear weapons are introduced into the region. One cannot argue with such a general evaluation. The question is how long it will take. What worries us is that, according to what we know today, the time Saddam Husayn needed to get nuclear weapons was much shorter than anybody had thought.

[Friedman] Are you disappointed that the United States is not taking military action against Iraq again, and that it seems that Washington is ignoring the Iraqi nuclear potential?

[Arens] I would not say so. The U.S. President made quite adamant and clear statements, and the UN supervisors are searching. At this stage we have no reason to believe that Iraq will be let off the hook on that.

[Friedman] Does that also include a military action, perhaps in the future?

[Arens] I cannot speak for the U.S. Administration. I believe that on various occasions the United States let it be known that it does not rule that out either.

[Friedman] There are those who describe the link Washington is currently making between guarantees, aliyah, settlements, and the date for convening the peace conference—as it is called there—as an opening shot. Are you concerned about the volleys that might still be fired from Washington?

[Arens] I tend to believe that the people who say it is an opening shot are those who in the past said we are undergoing an unprecedented crisis and that Israeli-U.S. relations are deteriorating to a new low. There is a tendency among us to exaggerate and to paint future relations between the two countries in black, despite the fact that for many years, certainly in the past decade, the ties were special, friendly, and between allies. I do not believe that it has changed. We have had differences of opinion with the United States on many issues; we still do, and will in the future.

[Friedman] Why then was the Israeli Government adamant in presenting the request for guarantees now, although the administration called for a delay?

[Arens] I do not believe that we should view it as a sign of stubbornness by the Government of Israel. The reason for presenting the request is that time is pertinent. The immigrants are arriving. It is not as though we have a forecast that immigrants will be arriving in another year or two, and we have all the time in the world, and the request can be presented now or in a year. It is the most natural thing in the world that a country facing such a unique challenge in its history, and finding that it does not have the resources to cope, appeals to its friend or friends to help it in the effort. That is the reason for our appeal and why it will be understood in the United States that there is no option to delay the aid. It is needed now.

[Friedman] If the administration nevertheless asks for a delay?

[Arens] The administration can ask. The United States also has budgetary and economic problems, but I believe that the urgency of the issue here is much greater. I believe that the United States will understand that. When people are arriving, the needs are now, and not in a year.

[Friedman] What is your view of the link the administration is making between the loan guarantees, settlement in the territories, and the convening of the peace conference—as they called it?

[Arens] Here also, I believe, the reference is made in the U.S. media rather than in the U.S. Administration. I did not hear of such a link from any representative of the administration. I am not surprised about that, because in the United States it is understood that what is involved is humanitarian aid to hundreds of thousands of Jews arriving from the USSR and that there is no logic in creating a link between assistance and the inability to overcome differences in other fields. Nobody in the United States would suggest that the Soviet immigrants be punished because the Israeli Government and the U.S. Administration do not see eye to eye on this or that issue.

[Friedman] Why is James Baker coming here at the end of next week, when it seemed that the path to the conference had, in fact, already been paved?

[Arens] First, you must ask him that. I suppose you will have the opportunity to do so when he arrives. I assume that he feels that there are still some loose ends that he has to tie before the conference is convened. I believe we are very close to its convocation.

[Friedman] At the date decided on, in October?

[Arens] Officially, a date has not been fixed. No invitations have been sent with a specific date, but there was a judgment that around October or November we would be able to convene the conference. I believe that is a major achievement and there is no room for nervousness or impatience. I believe we must simply be glad we are so close to the meeting that is supposed to bring about direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states, whether it is in September or October, or even November or December.

[Friedman] The painful issue of the MIA's and POW's remains unresolved. Do you have any news on that prior to the new year?

[Arens] You know that if I had such news I would not have waited for this interview. I have no news, although we have in recent weeks been investing great efforts and intensive activity in getting them back. The minute we have anything new and progress beyond the point we have been at for years, we will certainly make it public.

[Friedman] Nothing, despite the intensive activity in recent weeks?

[Arens] That should not come as a surprise, because we know with whom we are dealing: with Hizballah, with Islamic Jihad, with all sorts of terrorist groups whose concepts and rules of behavior are strange to us and the free world.

[Friedman] The coming year might be an election year. Do you want to compete as Likud leader for prime minister?

[Arens] The coming year will be an election year, certainly one of an election campaign, because Knesset elections are scheduled for November 1992. By next Rosh Hashana we will be deep in the election campaign. If the elections are held earlier, then they will be next year. I am not announcing any intentions such as those you mentioned. I am doing everything I can as a member of the Likud to prepare it for the coming elections. [passage omitted]

[Friedman] How will the fact that it is an election year influence the political processes? There are those who believe that it will stop them completely.

[Arens] I do not believe that, because the Likud, which holds the reins of power, is interested in advancing the process. It has nothing to do with elections. As far as I know, the opposition—the Alignment—will not upset the process.

[Friedman] On the eve of Rosh Hashana there are those who believe that our situation has never been better. Is that also your evaluation about our defense and political situation?

[Arens] That is a very good feeling to have. I wish we could believe that, but I do not think we can. Each period has its own problems and dangers, challenges and achievements. I have no doubt that in the present period we have made achievements, and the State of Israel is becoming stronger in the wake of the large aliyah. The aliyah, of course, puts before us the challenge of immigrant absorption and creating jobs for them. At the same time, we are living in a very difficult neighborhood. Around us are states under totalitarian rule. All except Egypt declare that they are in a state of war with Israel. They have large armies and continue to arm themselves. We have just spoken about the missile problem and the introduction of nonconventional arms to the region. Those are issues with which we will have to deal.

HA'ARETZ on State of Relations With U.S.

TA0609130191 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 6 Sep 91 p B1

[Editorial: "The Prime Minister's Poker Game"]

[Text] Israel-U.S. relations are not a bed of roses. This may have always been the case, and perhaps it is only our bad memory that makes us paint the past with rosy colors. Over the last three or four years, however, these relations seem to have become trying and tedious to both sides. One falling-out has come on the heels of another, and the disagreements have become more acute and, occasionally, more offensive.

As far as is known, there are personal grounds to it. The President and the less demonstrative Secretary of State Baker are disappointed (to use diplomatic language) with Yitzhaq Shamir and his credibility. The differences are not purely of a personal nature, but, to the extent that they are, the blame for the misunderstandings with the Israeli prime minister lies with the two distinguished Americans. It is not Shamir's fault that the United States insists on seeing him as a man for whom peace between Israel and its neighbors is of value in and of itself or, moreover, as a man who believes that peace is more important than holding on to Greater Israel.

The current dispute between Jerusalem and Washington over the latter's demand to postpone the presentation of the request for loan guarantees would not have erupted had the United States not been experiencing one of those moments when it mistakes wishful thinking for reality. The timing of the presentation of the Israeli request for guarantees for a $10 billion loan over the next five years ($2 billion every year) is of little consequence.

What is of consequence is what Shamir and Co. perceive as U.S. arrogance in meddling with Israel's right to settle Jews in all of Eretz Yisra'el and what President Bush and Secretary Baker perceive as Israel's chutzpah to demand from the United States money to finance actions that they believe contradict U.S. interests in the region.

U.S. officials have been told by "circles close to the prime minister" that Israel would rather forgo the guarantees altogether than commit itself to stop settling in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District. It is not Shamir's determination to carry out this order of priorities that is in doubt, but his ability to impose it on the

Israeli public, including his own followers. Among the latter, too, there are those who believe that absorbing immigrants is of the utmost importance. For practical and sentimental reasons, however, the United States has so far refrained from putting the Israeli dissenters to the test.

Yitzhaq Shamir has gained the reputation of being a smart cardplayer. Holding his weak cards close to his chest, he has managed to force his adversary, who holds strong cards and who can afford to up the ante, to forgo a mutual "show of hands." Shamir has beaten his adversary so far and always for the same reason: momentary weakness and, probably, consideration.

The question whether his lucky streak will last through this hand remains open. The risk this time is particularly high, because a disruption in relations with the United States—which would lead to the nonapproval of the guarantees—would seriously affect the frail state budget that was put together this week to meet the country's needs in the coming year. The absence of $2 billion from the credit column would seriously affect immigrant absorption, security, and overall economic stability. Those who hope that the answer will be positive, that Shamir will continue to score tactical victories, and that the guarantees will be granted without asking Israel to make any commitment in return had better remember that a victory for Shamir would spell the establishment of a binational state instead of a Jewish State of Israel.

Ehud Gol Replaces Pazner as Shamir's Media Aide

TA0809125391 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 8 Sep 91 p 1

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[Text] As of today, Ehud Gol is Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's media adviser.

Gol, 45, replaces Avi Pazner, who has been appointed as Israel's ambassador to Italy. Pazner is due to leave soon.

For the past three years, Gol has served as Israel's consul general in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Before that, he was the Foreign Ministry's spokesman and served in diplomatic posts in New York and Chicago.

Gol was selected for the post out of several candidates from the political establishment and the Likud Party.

In the past, when Yitzhaq Shamir was foreign minister, Ehud Gol served as the ministry's deputy spokesman.

Poll Shows Right Wing Boosts Electoral Strength

TA0609100591 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 6 Sep 91 p 2

[Report by Hana Kim]

[Text] A new poll by Hanokh and Rafi Smith shows that compared with the 1988 elections, the right-wing bloc has increased in strength, while the left-wing bloc has weakened. According to the poll, Yitzhaq Rabin is the preferred candidate for Labor Party leader.

The survey comprised 1,100 people, who were asked for which party they would vote were Knesset elections held today. The results were as follows:

The right-wing bloc—Likud 33 percent; Tehiya 3.5 percent; Tzomet 3.5 percent; Moledet 4 percent. Total: 44 percent.

The left-wing bloc—Labor Party 24 percent; Citizens Rights Movement 7.5 percent; MAPAM [United Workers Party] 2 percent (compared with 3 percent); Shinuy 2.5 percent. Total: 36 percent.

Analysts Examine Implications of Gulf War

TA0509120291 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 4 Sep 91

[Tel Aviv University press release]

[Text] Tel Aviv.—Former Chief of Military Intelligence, Maj. Gen. (res.) Aharon Yariv said yesterday (Wed. Sept. 4) he believed Iraq's ruler Saddam Husayn will renew his efforts to obtain a nuclear capability. "This man will not rest until he has the bomb," Yariv told Israeli defense correspondents.

Yariv, who heads Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, noted that Saddam Husayn emerged from the Gulf War "beaten, humiliated, a great failure who made major strategic mistakes—but in power."

If he remains on top for two to three more years, Saddam will resume his efforts to obtain a nuclear capability, Yariv warned. The former Chief of Military Intelligence spoke at a press conference marking the appearance of a Jaffee Center study "War in the Gulf: Implications for Israel."

In the study, Maj. Gen. (res.) Shlomo Gazit, one of Yariv's successors as Chief of Military Intelligence, suggested that Iraq may get away with violating the terms of the ceasefire agreement. Gazit doubted the world will have "the strength, the will and readiness to apply real pressure on Baghdad.... It seems the only way to impose these resolutions is by renewing the war; however, initiating a new war, when freeing Kuwait is no longer the issue, seems to be a highly unlikely option."

At the press conference, Yariv noted that the post war Middle East arms race had already begun. The U.S. has been arming the Gulf states and Egypt. Other western countries together with China, North Korea, Argentina, Brazil and Czechoslovakia have also been selling arms to the Arab countries. Iran is trying hard to obtain a nuclear capability, and there are no moderates in power in Tehran "just pragmatists."

Israel, too, is rearming itself. Yariv said he expected it to obtain more precision-guided munitions, intelligence gathering equipment, electronic warfare systems, bombs and attack helicopters which have proved themselves

during the Gulf War. According to Ari'el Levite, one of the Center's senior researchers, the Gulf War also proved Israel must prepare itself to contend with heavier missile attacks. Unlike the Iraqi attacks during the Gulf War, such attacks may not be conventional, at night and in a limited number.

The experts spoke the day after Israel's cabinet decided to increase the defense budget by NIS [new Israeli shekels] 500m. against a Treasury demand to slash the defense budget by NIS 1.1b. The increase seemed to bear out the contention of Ya'aqov Lifschitz, the Finance Ministry's former Director General, who told the reporters that wars reduce the political echelon's readiness to take security risks.

The experts seemed cautious about the prospects of the peace conference. Yosef Alpher, the Center's Deputy head and a former senior Mossad official said the conference, now scheduled to open in October, may be postponed. He said he expected drawnout talks, interrupted by national elections. The U.S. is likely to apply "continuous pressure" during the process, he added.

Alpher said it was not clear whether Syria genuinely sought direct and comprehensive talks and "whether it wanted real peace or something much less than that." The PLO might veto the peace process by barring Palestinian participation in it, he added. However, Saudi Arabia's readiness to ease the Arab boycott against Israel "is a strategic change." Meanwhile, Alpher noted, the Likud-led government has altered its stance towards King Husayn of Jordan. It no longer claims that "Jordan is Palestine," but supports the incumbent Hashemite regime and is trying to draw Jordan into the peace negotiations, Alpher said. However there has been no change in the government's refusal to cede land for peace, he added.

15 Israelis Meet PLO Officials in Vienna

TA0109200891 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 1 Sep 91

[Text] A delegation of 15 Israelis met in Vienna with Nabil Sha'th, 'Arafat's close adviser, and with Fathi 'Arafat, the PLO chairman's brother.

The meeting took place during a convening of the UN committee on Palestine affairs. During the meeting a sharp argument ensued between [Israeli activist] Uri Avneri and Sha'th. Avneri called on the Palestinians to take part in the peace conference unconditionally and not to make additional demands.

Our correspondent Gadi Sukenik was told that at the conference, the PLO leaders asserted that every time Faysal al-Husayni met with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, he had a written authorization from 'Arafat in his pocket. The PLO representative hinted that the formulation of the memorandum of understanding that the Palestinians are demanding from the United States had already reached an advanced stage and that the British were also involved in the contacts. Amod the Israelis who participated in the conference were [former general] Mati Peled and Nazareth Mayor Tawfiq Zayyad.

Government Praises U.S. Policy on Israeli Loans

JN0709112891 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur has said that Israel's strong reaction opposing U.S. President George Bush's call to postpone discussion of Israel's request for guarantees for loans to absorb the new immigrants reveals the truth about Israel's position on the peace process and its continued attempts to place obstacles and difficulties in the path of the current efforts to achieve peace in the region.

In statements to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY-PETRA, al-Nusur said the U.S. position on this issue is positive and constructive and is in harmony with the commitment made by President Bush and his secretary of state to the elements of the initiative on whose basis the current U.S. peace efforts are made. The U.S. position is also in harmony with its declared policy on the settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories as it constitutes a major block to peace opportunities, al-Nusur added.

The minister said he hopes this position will continue and be strengthened. This, he added, will put Israel to the real test regarding its intentions.

'Step in Right Direction'

JN0709073691 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 7 Sep 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Loan on Hold!"]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker appears to have put on hold Israel's request for a U.S-guaranteed $10 billion loan to settle new Jewish immigrants in Israel when he ruled out consideration of this deal for the time being lest it interfere with the delicate stage that the peace process has reached.

There is no doubt that this position by Mr. Baker is a step in the right direction even though the secretary of state has attempted to downgrade its impact as a pressure tactic against Tel Aviv's determination to derail the U.S.-brokered peace process by continuing its colonisation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including of course East Jerusalem. At a time when preparations for the projected peace conference have reached a very critical stage, Israeli settlement building on the occupied territories has to be the biggest obstacle to holding the parley. Had Washington taken a different posture on the $10 billion loan guarantee to Israel, it would have given the Arab side a clear signal that there would be no more Arab land left to trade for peace. In retrospect, even though Mr. Baker has denied any linkage between the peace talks envisaged to take place in October of this year and the loan issue there is every reason to believe that in fact the linkage is organic and there for all parties to see and appreciate.

It was good news last night that Mr. Baker's stance was publicly backed by U.S. President George Bush himself lest Tel Aviv contemplate some hope that it could still drive a wedge between the President and his secretary of state on this matter.

Until the U.S. chief executive fortified State Department assurances that the Israeli request for a multi-billion dollar loan to settle new Jewish immigrants would not be considered for the time being pending the assessment of its impact on the peace process, the U.S. secretary of state's impending visit to [the] area to tie up loose ends was in big danger of being so undermined and weakened that it might have failed before it even began. This is the time therefore for the entire U.S. body politic, including Congress, to speak with one voice on this and other peace-related issues in order to lend more credence to Washington's stated determination to attain honourable and lasting peace in the area. As Mr. Baker's September trip to the Middle East will make or break the peace process, his hands need to be strengthened to the maximum, especially in the aftermath of the Israeli prime minister's refusal Thursday to even suspend the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in utter defiance of U.S. policies on Israel's application for the loan.

At the same time, Washington is called upon to speak louder and act more forcefully and effectively against the usurpation of Arab lands to resettle Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union and elsewhere. Tel Aviv would not have dared to defy international opposition to its colonisation policy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip the way it did had it not detected a weakening of international resolve against the construction of new settlements on Arab lands.

Moscow can also come to the rescue of the fragile peace process in the Middle East by making it unequivocally clear that Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel will not be permitted to proceed before there is a just and permanent settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem. It goes without saying that Moscow and Washington can act in league and hope to achieve solid results—and they should.

King Husayn: 242 Means Total Israeli Withdrawal

JN0509152491 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] The interview with King Husayn, conducted by the BBC World Service in English within the program "Leaders and Leadership," was broadcast last night, and rebroadcast twice today, in the morning and at noon.

At the beginning of the interview, the program presenter quoted a saying by the famous English writer Shakespeare: "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. His Majesty King Husayn is great in all three respects."

Among the questions posed to His Majesty King Husayn was one on the 1967 war. Jordan's involvement in that war, and whether his majesty had any doubts on its outcome.

His majesty said: I had serious doubts, but Jordan had a commitment as a member of the Arab League and a party to the Joint Arab Defense Pact. Israel had diverted the course of River Jordan. When I was in al-'Aqabah, I learned that the late President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir had closed off Tiran Straits. I went to Cairo, and wondered about the reason behind all this. He said that the objective was to defend the Arabs. I then decided for a joint defense with Egypt, and also with Syria.

Question: Do you mean to say that you thought you would lose, and had you told President 'Abd-al-Nasir about this?

His majesty answered: Of course I told him. It was very clear. The time was one and a half years before achieving Arab military preparedness and the military balance with Israel.

Question: You have helped draft UN Security Council Resolution 242, which calls on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories in return for Arab recognition of it. Did you understand that resolution as meaning the return of all occupied territories, most of them, or some of them.

Answer: I understood it as meaning all of them. There was a cease-fire line; not an international border as is the case with other countries. As for Jerusalem, it is an occupied territory, and was part of Jordan when it was occupied. All Arab states, and the rest of the world talk about the city within the context of peace because it is important for three religions.

Question: The world is talking about peace, and U.S. Secretary of State Baker is talking about his plan to convene a peace conference. He has the support of the Soviet Union and the other Arab states. Is there an important role for Jordan as a peacemaker and what is that role?

Answer: Jordan's role is vital and important. We believe that we seek to achieve a comprehensive peace for all states in the region. There must be an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue to settle the problems concerning the Palestinian side. We have proposed the possibility of a canopy to achieve that, and a joint delegation, if necessary. Naturally, those elected by the Palestinians themselves will be the ones to represent the Palestinians in that delegation—as far as the Palestinian side is concerned. But, as for the Jordanian side, we will deal with our problems with Israel. These include water and other issues. Here I would like to say this is an important development, because I believe that if you look at Jordan and Palestine, including Israel, you will see there is no way the region can cope with all Palestinians and Jordanians and Israelis without giving everyone their rights, including the Palestinian legitimate rights. The Palestinian must have the right to a nationality just like the Israeli. Unfortunately, the Palestinian in this region has no rights except in Jordan. This is part of the regional situation which we seek to achieve.

'Frontline' States To Discuss Coordination

JN0709063091 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 7 Sep 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur has asserted that the meeting among the foreign ministers of the frontline states to coordinate positions on the peace conference, expected to convene in October, will take place after the Palestinian side determines its position.

Dr. al-Nusur added: When the Palestinians decide their position, there will be a better chance to convene a meeting by the foreign ministers of the frontline states—Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan.

He said the venue for the meeting has not been determined, or even discussed, yet.

No Counter to Egypt's Visa Requirement Planned

JN0809082991 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 8 Sep 91 pp 1, 23

[Text] Amman—Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur has expressed Jordan's readiness to give good intentions and offices a chance with regard to the recent Egyptian measures by which Jordanians wishing to visit Egypt must obtain an entry visa beforehand.

In a statement to AL-RA'Y, Dr. al-Nusur added that Jordan still adheres to the policy of self-restraint. He said: We believe that the recent Egyptian measures are unjustified, and that there is no reason for dispute and estrangement.

He said that Jordan will not adopt countermeasures, but will give good intentions and offices a chance.

Returnees From Kuwait Total 21,506 in One Month

JN0709130491 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The number of Jordanian citizens who returned from Kuwait in the period 6 August to 6 September 1991 has reached 21,506. Salamah Hammad, secretary general of the Interior Ministry, who heads the committee charged with taking care of the returnees, said the committee, through the program it had worked out as an initial ad hoc plan, is providing immediate assistance to the needy in the food and medical spheres. At the same time, he said, the committee is working relentlessly to formulate a long-term strategy aimed at benefiting from the technical expertise of the returnees and absorbing them into the Jordanian economic sectors.

Could Affect Peace Process

JN0709071991 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 7 Sep 91 pp 1, 5

[By staff reporter Lamis K. Andoni]

[Text] Amman—Jordan will demand that Kuwait use part of its war reparations from Iraq to compensate

Jordanians and Palestinians who have been forced out of the emirate and has asked the Kuwaiti government to extend the November deadline for the departure of all foreign nationals, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the Regent, said this week.

In a joint interview with the JORDAN TIMES and the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, Crown Prince Hasan also warned that the political, social and economic strain placed on Jordan as a result of the influx of the returnees can seriously undermine the Kingdom's ability to contribute effectively to the peace process.

"You cannot enter into international obligations if you have some basic structural problems at home," the Crown Prince argued. "That is something that has to be recognised."

More than 280,000 Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates have returned to Jordan since the eruption of the Gulf crisis in August 2, 1990 and Jordanian officials expect the Kuwaiti government to expel more than 100,000 by the end of November.

Prince Hasan indicated that the Jordanian government was currently drawing a legal framework that would enable it to claim Kuwaiti compensation for Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates from war reparations imposed by the U.N. against Iraq.

"Logically I believe that (Kuwait's reparations) should include reparations for these people because, after all, they are Kuwaiti dependents," he said. "There has to be a recognition of the fact that you do not just summarily expel people without due recognition of their basic rights."

The Crown Prince said that the Jordanian government has asked Kuwait, through various channels, to extend the November deadline.

"The November deadline regarding foreign nationals will directly affect the future of Palestinians, Jordanians and Jordanian document holders," he asserted. "We have been trying through different channels to impress upon them that effectively this deadline should be extended."

Although most of the Jordanians and Palestinians who were forced to leave are from Kuwait, other Gulf states are also expelling Jordanian expatriates.

Voicing strong criticism of the Gulf states' attitude towards Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates, the Crown Prince warned that such policies could undermine the Middle East peace process.

"The most ancillary issue is for them to contribute to the stability of the region during peace talks," Prince Hasan said. "But I do not see how they are contributing to a stable process... by making Jordan's task and the Palestinians' task that much more difficult, throwing human suffering at us the way they are."

"How is this irresponsible arrangement (going to) work out?" Prince Hasan asked.

The Crown Prince warned that pressures that are being exerted on Jordan and the Palestinians can crucially undermine Arab efforts to regain Palestinian national rights through a negotiated settlement.

"To effectively undermine (our) domestic constituency (meaning Jordanians and Palestinians) and to make it bitter is basically to say good-bye to Palestine," he said.

The Crown Prince drew a contrast between the way Jordan, "which has said yes to the peace process," is being "punished," and the way Israel is being treated by providing it with incentives to take part in the negotiations.

He pointed out that in the case of Israel the incentive (the proposed $10 billion in housing loan guarantees for absorbing Soviet Jewish immigrants) will in itself be a major obstacle to the very peace process that the U.S. is trying to talk Israel into entering.

"At the end of the day, is there a genuine interest in seeing $10 billion in housing loan guarantees as the incentive for Israel to say yes only to find a no?" he asked, "I mean that is a very painless way of effectively saying: Yes, I (meaning Israel) will attend the peace process if it includes affirmation of the settlement policy."

The Crown Prince expressed the view that in contrast Jordan is placed in a situation whereby it wants to take part in the peace conference but may be unable to contribute effectively to the process because of pressures it is being subjected to.

"The question does pose itself: Why all these pressures on Jordan," the Crown Prince said. "Ultimately (if the pressures continue, we will be) forced into where even if we say yes in name we cannot contribute to the process."

Throughout the interview, the Crown Prince made it clear that he did not view the expected impact on the demographic balance in Jordan—most of the returnees are of Palestinian origin—as constituting a threat to the regime's stability. His main concern, as he repeatedly emphasised, was that the resulting financial strain on Jordan's fragile economy will be the main source of any possible social tensions.

In his opinion, unemployment (according to a recent survey, more than 80 per cent of the returnees are now without jobs) could prove to be the most crucial political problem.

"This (unemployment) is a highly explosive issue," he warned.

The Crown Prince explained that unemployment will turn into an explosive political issue as the returnees, many of whom are highly skilled, will not find an opportunity to develop and use their talents and skills.

But if the returnees are provided with the chance to employ their entrepreneurial talents and skills they will in effect be a major factor of stability for the country.

The Crown Prince basically disagreed with the theory that the returnees would automatically turn to political or religious extremism as a result of despair.

He refused parallels being drawn between the returnees and the Palestinian refugees who came to Jordan after the creation of Israel in 1948 and the 1967 war, in terms of political extremism associated with Palestinian destitution at the time.

"Most of them (the returnees) are middle class; and frankly to characterise them as the third migration—i.e. equate them with 1967 misery, nihilism and extremism—I think is a little bit quick and possibly wrong," he argued. "I mean these are entrepreneurs who contributed to stability of one of the most vital economic regions in the world—the Gulf."

"If their talents are recognised... and are allowed to be developed in a situation of stability, I think they can contribute effectively to the stability of Jordan."

But if Jordan continues "to be punished" and consequently the returnees' talents are frustrated then the issue can be very explosive, he warned.

The Crown Prince resented and dismissed suggestions that the fact that the majority of the returnees are Palestinian might play a negative effect on national unity or the political and social fabric of the country.

"I personally abhor such provincial thinking ... I am not concerned with what percentage is of which origin or background ... or whether they have lived with us or have not lived with us," he said.

Reiterating calls made by His Majesty King Husayn for Arab states to provide dual nationality for Palestinian and Arab expatriates, the Crown Prince stressed that the whole issue is linked to and hinges largely on finding a solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict in a way that will also take into account the limited resources in the region.

"In the end, politically speaking, it is very clear that Jordan, the West Bank, Israel and Palestine cannot absorb all of the Jewish migrants of the world nor all of the Palestinian migrants of the world," he said.

In the interview the Crown Prince also indicated that the emerging situation in the post-Gulf war era and the prevalent Western and Gulf states' policies indicate that countries like Jordan, which are not part of the political set-up, will pay the price.

He cautioned that the post-Gulf war set-up in the region, including the new security arrangements, will be at the expense of those who are trying to pursue an independent line and are not part of the emerging economic and security pacts.

"We are hatab juhannam (the hell's woodfire)," he said.

Iranian Charge Urges Release of Muslim Hostages

LD0609180391 Tehran IRNA in English 1453 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Beirut, Sept. 6, IRNA—Iranian Charge d'Affaires to Beirut Mohammad Javad Zamaniyan assured the families of Shaykh Raghib Harb and of Lebanese struggler Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd that the release of Lebanese and Palestinian hostages is the main element for solving the hostage issue.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd was abducted by Zionist soldiers in 1988 when he was at his home, and has since been at the custody of his captors. The Iranian charge affaires said to reporters that the Zionist regime refuses to release Muslim hostages.

Zamaniyan on Thursday paid a courtesy visit to the families of the hostages in southern Lebanon.

Israeli Pilot Held by Lebanese, Not Iranians

NC0609163791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Husayn al-Musawi, leader of the Islamic Amal Movement, affirmed today that Ron Arad, the Israeli pilot who has been captured in Lebanon and is still alive, is being held by Lebanese Muslims, not by Iranians.

In a statement published by the press today, al-Musawi accused the United States and Israel of hindering the resolution of the Western hostage issue in Lebanon.

PKK Denies Kidnapping Westerners in Kurdistan

NC0809194991 Paris AFP in English 1924 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] Al-Hulwah, Lebanon, Sept 8 (AFP)—An official with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Lebanon on Sunday denied that his group was involved in any way with the kidnapping last month of five Westerners in Turkish Kurdistan.

"All foreigners who want to visit the regions (in eastern Turkey) under our control are welcome," Nu'man Salman told AFP at a party training camp here in Syrian-controlled eastern Lebanon.

"But they must inform us in advance, through party offices abroad, so that we can protect them. The Turkish regime is one of evil intentions."

The Turkish government has said it suspects the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which in August kidnapped and then released 10 German tourists after a week, of being behind the abductions of three Americans, a Briton and an Australian on August 30. But Salman insisted that the party has "no link whatsoever" with the kidnapping of the five. He said the party was expecting a Turkish attack on its base here, where 500 to 700 fighters are receiving training, and has taken defensive measures.

"In the past," he said, "the enemy threatened to attack our bases in northern Iraq and they did," referring to a sweep carried out in early August. Turkey, according to Salman, has appealed to Syria to close the camp but without success. "Most of our brothers are in Turkey and this base is not very important," he argued.

The Kurdistan Workers' Party is the principal Kurdish military and political organization inside Turkey, where it has been banned since its formation in 1978. Its leader, Abdallah Ocalan, is based here but is currently in Turkey.

Earlier in the day, it was reported in Sydney that Australian officials were investigating reports that an Australian archaeologist believed to have been kidnapped by Kurdish rebels in Turkey was alive and well, and might soon be released.

A Kurdish reporter with Special Broadcasting Service [SBS] told AFP he had spoken to the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which had news of Allen Roberts, the Australian who was abducted at gunpoint on August 30 with three Americans and a Briton.

SBS reporter Shahin Bakir said the party representative "stated that a guerrilla unit supportive of PKK was holding Dr. Roberts, and he gave me a message to convey to the Australian government".

Meanwhile, a military official in Bingol, in southeastern Turkey, told AFP on Sunday that the five kidnapped persons "might be in northern Iraq".

He said on the telephone that "We have looked everywhere for 10 days for the three Americans, the Briton and the Australian, but have been unable to find them". He requested anonymity.

He noted that "the separatist terrorists" had taken seven Turkish soldiers abducted on August 4 into northern Iraq. They were kidnapped at Samanli, near Semdinli, in Hakkari Province in the Turkish-Iraqi border region.

Lahd Militia Reportedly Threatens Bra'shit

NC0709064591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Agent Lahd's militia has threatened to raze the village of Bra'shit to the ground if operations against the occupation forces continue.

A political commentary on the agents' radio said that the survival of one village means nothing in terms of the situation in Lebanon or any neighboring country.

Meanwhile, the Amal Movement has said in a statement that three Lebanese girls were killed in the security strip early yesterday when a joint patrol of the Zionist army and its Lahd agents fired automatic weapons and anti-tank shells at a house in al-Qantarah near Marj 'Uyun as it was searching for resistance fighters. The three girls, who were asleep at the time, were killed and others were wounded.

Afghanistan

Statement Issued Recognizing Baltic States

LD0709172391 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Statement by the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan concerning the independence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia Republics, dated 7 September 1991]

[Text] In following the nonaligned and peace-seeking foreign policy, in respecting the principle of self-determination of nations, and in respecting the will of the people of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan recognizes the independence of these countries, and regards [their independence] in total conformity with the universal declaration of human rights.

In honoring the principles of international law and in observing the UN Charter, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, as an independent country, attaches enormous value to the consolidation and broadening of reciprocal advantageous relations in the political, economic, and cultural spheres with the independent Republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The government also values the principle of defending their membership in the United Nations and regards this matter as being toward the interest of the people of our countries, peace, and stability in the world.

The Government and people of the Republic of Afghanistan sincerely wishes success for the people of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in their search for democracy, the construction, and progress of their countries, and desires that these countries as independent members of the human community accomplish their role in maintaining international peace and security.

USSR Supreme Soviet Delegation Visits Kabul

LD0809180791 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1539 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Dr. Khalil Ahmad Abawi, president of the Wolasi Jerga, met this afternoon with a delegation of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. They came to Kabul at the invitation of the Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan and met at the president's office in the headquarters of the Wolasi Jerga. During the meeting the president spoke about relations between the Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan and the parliament of the Soviet Union. He said: (?The formidable) policy of the Republic of Afghanistan and the changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union play an important and valuable role in the political solution of the Afghan problem. Sayd Muzafarshah Muzafari and Abdorrahim Anyi, deputy presidents of the Wolasi Jerga, and 'Abdol Ghafar Garandai, head of the Wolasi Jerga affairs [department of the Presidency] were also present at the meeting.

According to another report, the delegation of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, which has come to Kabul for a series of friendly meetings and talks, met this afternoon with the administrative board of the Senate of the Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan at its headquarters. During the meeting both sides conducted talks on issues of mutual interest. The Soviet delegation furnished comprehensive information with the administrative board of the Senate on changes that have happened in that country. It noted that there is an article in documents of the recent congress of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union according to which the treaties and protocols of the Soviet Union with all countries including the Republic of Afghanistan are valid and credible and that the Soviet Union observes its undertakings in this respect. The administrative board of the Senate asked some questions on issues of interest which were answered by the Soviet delegation.

Bangladesh

Government Recognizes 3 Baltic States

BK0709160091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Bangladesh has recognized the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. A Foreign Office spokesman in Dhaka said the government looks forward to mutually beneficial relationship between Bangladesh and the newly independent Baltic states.

Former President Ershad's Trial Continues 7 Sep

Newsman Asked Not To Interview

BK0709160691 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Newsmen covering the trial of former President Ershad have been asked to refrain from interviewing or taking any statement from the accused in the court premises. Immediately the court resumed today's session after a two-day recess, the attorney general said the accused, Ershad, was repeatedly making political statements and granting interviews to journalists using the court compound as a political platform. After hearing the attorney general, the judge gave his orders.

Trial Not To 'Belittle' Armed Forces

BK0909065091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0633 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] Dhaka, Sept 9 (AFP)—The trial of deposed Bangladesh President Hussain Mohammad Ershad would not "belittle" the armed forces, Attorney General Aminul Huq was quoted as saying by the press Monday.

"The corruption case had been brought against him (Ershad) to establish rule of law and had no connection with the image of the armed forces," Huq told a special tribunal Sunday.

Defence Lawyer Sirajul Huq had charged that Ershad had served 34 years in the army and this case was aimed "not only to malign him but also to belittle the armed forces."

In January, sources close to the military had warned that the trial could spark a military coup, if top defence officials were implicated along with Ershad.

Reliable sources said current Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan was maintaining a "precarious" balance within his forces, some of whom were still sympathetic to their former chief, Ershad.

Ershad, 61, a former army general and Bangladesh's longest serving head of state, seized power in a 1982 bloodless coup and was forced to step down last December in the face of mass unrest against his regime.

He has been sentenced to 10 years hard labour for possesing eight illegal weapons and is currently facing another court on charges of corruption, while several other cases are pending.

India

Strike Call in Punjab Evokes 'Mixed Response'

BK0709092291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] In Punjab, the bundh [strike] call by some Akali Dal factions and other organizations for today has evoked mixed response. The call for bundh was given in protest against the killing of a hardcore militant, Gurjant Singh Rajasthani, in an encounter with the police last week.

An official spokesman said in Chandigarh said all essential services, banks, and train services are functioning normally. Schools and colleges are open, but the attendance is thin at some places. Barring some interior routes, buses are plying as usual, while the impact of the bundh call on shops and business establishments varies from 10 to 70 percent at different places. The spokesman said no untoward incident has been reported from anywhere in the state. The state goverment has made elaborate security arrangements in view of the bundh call.

Further on Strike Call, Violence

BK0809033591 Hong Kong AFP in English 1726 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] New Delhi, Sept 7 (AFP)—A general strike called to protest the slaying of a Sikh guerrilla leader virtually crippled the Indian state of Punjab on Saturday, police and news reports said.

Almost half the shops and business establishments were shut while road transport was seriously hit in the northern state, with private buses going of the roads, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported.

Train services were normal, but Sikh militants blew up a portion of rail track in the border district of Amritsar, a bastion of Sikh militants fighting for a homeland called Khalistan.

No further details of the sabotage were available.

The call for Saturday's shutdown was given by scores of Sikh groups at a September 1 conclave to protest the killing by security forces of Sikh militant leader Gurjant Singh Rajasthani.

Rajasthani, who headed the outlawed Khalistan commando force and was blamed for numerous murders, was killed in a gun battle on August 31 in Punjab's Ropar district. He carried a reward of 40,000 dollars on his head.

PTI said the general strike was more successful in Punjab's rich rural areas, particularly in the three districts bordering Pakistan, home to most of the Sikh separatist guerrillas.

In Amritsar City, home to Sikhdom's Golden Temple, the offices of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, the Sikh religious parliament, were shut.

Some 3,310 people have died in the Khalistan campaign this year. India accuses Pakistan of backing the Sikh separatists, a charge denied repeatedly by Islamabad.

3 Pakistanis Injured in Punjab Train Attack

BK0909051091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] In Punjab, six militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in Ferozepore District last evening. According to an official spokesman, over a six-hour long encounter followed a raid on militants hideout in a village Zeera area. Search of the area is still continuing.

Elsewhere in the state, unidentified gunmen shot dead two farmers in Faridkot District last evening.

Meanwhile, militants again fired on the running Atari Special train between Sirhind and Govindgarh railway stations in Patila District. Three Pakistani nationals traveling in the train received minor injuries in the incident.

Defense Minister Criticizes Pakistan on Kashmir

BK0709090291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has criticized Pakistan for adopting double standards on the Kashmir issue. Talking to newsmen in Indore this morning, he said while on the one hand Islamabad is talking of peace and on the other it is providing assistance to the terrorists. The minister said political process should be revived in the Kashmir valley to solve the problems.

Parties Deplore Pakistan Raising Kashmir Issue

BK0609165191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] The Congress-I has deplored Pakistan's attempt to raise the Kashmir issue at the Nonaligned forum and described it as an extremely unfortunate development.

The party spokesman, Professor C.P. Thakur, said it violates the spirit of the Simla agreement, which forms the basis for resolving bilateral issues. He said the Nonaligned forum cannot be allowed to be misused for raising bilateral issues and wanted the government to take all necessary steps through diplomatic channels to prevent it.

Troops Retake Area Seized by Pakistani Army

BK0609155891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1504 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] New Delhi, Sept 6 (AFP)—The Indian Government said Friday that a small area along the line of control dividing Kashmir was captured by Pakistani troops but retaken after fighting last week.

Minister of State for Defence S. Krishna Kumar told the upper house that about half-a-square-kilometre (0.2-square-mile) area of Kirni Village in Kashmir's Punch sector had been taken over by the Pakistanis after a raid.

Kumar told parliament's upper house that Indian troops had recaptured it within 48 hours after driving back the infiltrators.

The minister said the Pakistani capture of the area was preceded by skirmishes between the two troops that erupted August 26 before they ended Monday under a truce agreement.

India and Pakistan both claim Kashmir and have fought two of their three wars over it. India alleges that a bloody Muslim separatist campaign raging in Kashmir is aided by Islamabad, which denies the charge.

Kumar's senior colleague, Defence Minister Sharad Pawar, said Thursday that India had lost one officier and four soldiers in the skirmishes, for which each side blames the other.

Pawar said 20 Pakistanis had been killed, while Islamabad has put Indian military fatalities at 50 in the fighting.

2 Militants Killed, 8 Arrested in Kashmir

BK0609144291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] In the Kashmir valley, two militants were killed in an encounter and eight suspected subversives arrested in the last 24 hours. The encounter between the militants and the security forces took place in Baramula District last night. One civilian was also killed in the exchange of fire.

Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia Independence Recognized

BK0709144291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] India has recognized the independence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Felicitating the presidents of the three Baltic states, the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, described the decision of the State Council of the Soviet Union granting independence to the three states as a development which has resulted through peaceful negotiations among the concerned parties. The prime minister expressed the hope that the people of India and the three Baltic states will enjoy close and friendly relations for mutual benefit and cooperation.

Commentary Urges Sri Lanka To Resolve Conflicts

BK0709111091 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Kherasagar commentary]

[Text] Giving account of the Elephant Pass battle between government forces and the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam], the Sri Lankan defense secretary, Mr. Ranatunge, has rightly said that nothing can be achieved by military success alone. It is finally a political problem and can only have a political solution. An analysis of political, economic, and military compulsions on the part of both Sri Lanka government as well as of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] show that it is the most appropriate time for them to seek and find out a political solution of the ethnic conflict which has been going for over a decade in the island, causing untold sufferings to the people there. Victory for none is within sight in this endless (?parallel) of armed confrontation.

For the LTTE, Rajiv Gandhi's assassination was the beginning of their political end and Elephant Pass, a beginning of their end militarily. The 25-day siege and battle of the Elephant Pass has so far been fought most intensely, but crucial and most casualty-ridden in the decade-long conflict. Estimates put the loss to over 2,000 lives, mostly of LTTE cadres, and an equal number injured. In terms of loss of manpower and resources, already quite scarce, it has been an unmitigated disaster for the LTTE. The timing of the battle is also significant. There were reports of formation of LTTE cabinet almost simultaneously with the attack on the Pass, thereby implying if the Pass falls into LTTE hands, Prabhakaran would declare Eelam all the way from Jaffna to Vavuniya. This dream is also shattered.

For the Tigers, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi has proved disastrous. Their influence in Tamil Nadu has been eroded. Raids and crackdowns have resulted in sealing their arms and explosive units and catching of large quantity of ammunition. Their men have been compelled to take cover, rendering them impotent. Hence, their readiness for unconditional peace talks in Jaffna. Sri Lankan Government too have shown keenness by constituting a 43 member of parliament belonging to Sri Lankan Freedom Party. [sentence as heard]. But, how sincerely it would work, only time would tell. But, if the opportunity is lost, it would cost the island-nation very heavily.

The Premadasa government has no big reason to feel very elevated at the victory over Elephant Pass. LTTE if takes to hit-and-run tactics, the gains of the past victory

to government would be lost. [sentence as heard] Colombo government should not forget that codenamed Operation Balawegaya took 25 days to clean the Elephant Pass; that too after mobilizing over 8,000 troops backed by much of country's air force and navy against an estimated only 3,000 LTTE cadres.

In his recent visit to India, the Sri Lankan foreign affairs minister could sign only an agreement to set up Indo-Sri Lanka joint commission, but could not get a firmer Indian commitment to deal with the LTTE than was eventually forthcoming. The visiting minister, Mr. Harold Herath, expected that India should not hesitate to join hands with his government in beating LTTE after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. The visiting dignitary had, however, forgotten that almost everyday President Premadasa reminds his people how he forced the evacuation of the IPKF [Indian Peacekeeping Force] because Sri Lanka's dignity as a sovereign nation was stake. Shri [Mr.] Premadasa forgets that IPKF was sent there at the request of Sri Lanka. Indian prime minister rightly said that the two countries would deal with the Tamil militants in their own separate ways. Forthcoming SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] conference is another compulsion for the Sri Lankan government to seek peace as no member-country appears to share Sri Lanka's self-confidence in ensuring incident-free summit. It is time the two sides derived wisdom from the words of John F. Kennedy: Let us begin anew, remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness; that sicerity is subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate.

Exchange Crisis Impairs Defense Preparedness

BK0909081091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] The defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, says the severe foreign exchange crisis has impaired India's defense preparedness. Inaugurating the new air route surveillance radar at the Hindustan Aeronautics Complex in Banglore today, Mr. Pawar said several defense items could not be imported on account of this. He said in such a situation it is difficult for the government to find public sector units, particularly in the defense sector. Mr. Pawar added that they will henceforth have to generate their own foreign exchange resources by entering into global markets.

Prime Minister Rao Says Economic Crisis Finished

BK0709041091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The prime minister says the worst part of the country's economic crisis is over. Addressing a news conference in the German capital, Bonn, yesterday evening, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, said the country is now back on its normal course of development. He said within the next two or three years India will be able to play a very important role in the emerging new world. On the political situation, Mr. Rao said asserted that his government's minority character has not come in the way of solving the country's problems. He said since no single party can tackle the serious problems faced by the country, he has adopted the part of consensus. The prime minister said the German leaders have responded positively to the recent economic reforms in the country.

About the role of nonalignment, Mr. Rao said the movement has not lost its relevance in the changed global scenario. Expressing the hope that the Nonaligned Movement will redefine its objectives, the prime minister said New Delhi will continue to play its role in the movement.

On the Indo-Soviet treaty, Mr. Rao said the treaty continues despite the changes taking place in the Soviet Union. Relations between the two countries date back several centuries and did not begin in 1971 when the treaty was signed, he pointed out.

The prime minister expressed India's support of the idea of the common market for South Asia. About Pakistan's proposal for a nuclear free South Asia, Mr. Rao said New Delhi has rejected it as it does not deal with the question of the countries which already possess nuclear weapons or capability.

An agreement was signed yesterday under which Germany will provide 390 million deutsche marks as aid to India. It was signed by the Indian foreign secretary and the German state secretaries of foreign affairs and economic cooperation.

Bhutan King Begins 4-Day Official Visit

BK0909120091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] King Jigme Singye Wangchuk of Bhutan arrived in New Delhi today for a four-day official visit. During his stay, he will have talks with the prime minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao. He will also have discussions with the ministers of health, external affairs, and water resources. The Bhutanese king is likely to sign an agreement on civil aviation. Mr. Wangchuk, who is accompanied by his foreign minister and the Planning commission minister, will call on the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman.

Iran

President Accepts Saudi Invitation To Visit

LD0709170391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] In response to the message sent by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to King Fahd, regarding the realization of the Palestinian people's rights and regional security, Dr. 'Abd al-Aziz al-Khuwaytir, Saudi Arabia's education minister and special envoy of King Fahd, was received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani this evening.

During the meeting, the president, having expressed his concern at the infringement of the Muslim Palestinian

people's rights due to global arrogance, said: We hope that all leaders of Islamic countries will take this issue seriously, hence preventing the Palestinian nation from sustaining any losses. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed: Islamic Iran is ready to extend any kind of assistance and cooperation to prevent this from happening.

Pointing to the serious problems in the Islamic world, such as the Palestinian issue, the Islamic summit conference, the Iraqi issue, and the presence of alien forces in the region, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: The significance of each of these issues warrants constant negotiations among leaders of Islamic countries, and I hope to meet with Mr. Fahd in connection with these issues. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also expressed his gratitude to the Saudi Arabian nation and government for their cooperation regarding the performance of last year's Hajj, describing it as the reason for further cooperation between the two countries. Our country's president, thanking King Fahd for inviting him to Saudi Arabia, said: I hope to make this visit in the near future.

In the beginning of the meeting, at which Mr. Khatami, the minister of culture and Islamic guidance, was also present, the special envoy of the Saudi king, having submitted King Fahd's written message, declared to our president his government's readiness for cooperation toward the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people. He also conveyed King Fahd's gratitude to the Iranian Government and nation for their excellent cooperation with respect to the performance of the Hajj.

Velayati Denies Bid To Improve Ties With Egypt

LD0809102191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] The foreign minister, Mr. Velayati, today strongly denied Egyptian newspaper articles claiming that Iran has asked the Arab League Chairman 'Ismat 'Abd-al Majid for improvement in relations between Iran and Egypt. During an interview with Iranian correspondents at the 10th foreign ministerial session of the Nonaligned Movement in Accra, the capital of Ghana, he spoke of an article in the Egyptian newspaper AL-WAFD claiming that he had sent a letter to the former Egyptian foreign minister, 'Ismat 'Abd- al Majid.

Velayati said: There have been similar articles quoting Egyptian officials on a number of occasions. Mr. Velayati reiterated: The Egyptians have requested the establishment of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran through various intermediaries on a number of occasions. We have rejected this each time. He added: In a certain country, a high-ranking Egyptian official accidently met one of the deputies of the [Iranian] Foreign Ministry and requested a meeting. That request was rejected. Furthermore, the Egyptians have sent me messages many times through various channels. All of them were rejected.

Mr. Velayati said in conclusion: The grounds for this are clear. Egypt has accepted the Camp David accord. This opposes the Islamic Republic of Iran's views and opinions on the Palestine issue. We do not recognize any legitimacy for the Zionist regime. The Egyptian press reports are strongly denied.

Besharati on Soviet Ties, Middle East Peace

LD0809135991 Tehran IRNA in English 1324 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Qom, Sept. 8, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran has studied the issue of recognising the newly-independent Soviet republics taking into consideration international criteria, and will also promote its overall ties with the Soviet central government.

Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati who made the above remark to IRNA here last night, added that Iran will explore every channel to consolidate its expanding ties with the Soviet central government in Moscow.

"The principled and rational stand of Iran vis-a-vis the recent developments in the Soviet Union can be of help in this connection," he said.

On ties with Iraq, he expressed hope that with the improvement of political relations, conditions would emerge for the release of the remaining prisoners of war and other Iranians held by that country.

Besharati refuted reports of promotion in Iran-Egypt ties, saying that relations with Cairo will remain at the level of interest sections as before. "Iran does not intend to improve its ties with Cairo," Besharati stressed.

The deputy foreign minister made it clear that the so-called Arab-Israel peace plan will yield no results, so long as the presence of Palestinians is ignored.

He also blasted Washington's idea of the "new world order," noting that it was a cover to pursue expansionist goals and preserving the United States' hegemonist interests.

"The new world order is an accepted reality after the collapse of communism and fundamental changes in the eastern bloc countries, but the American administration is trying to exploit the conditions to its own interests. Of course, this goal of the U.S. is doomed to fail," Besharati predicted.

Habibi Denies Hostage, Arms Purchase Link

LD0909102291 Tehran IRNA in English 0934 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 9, IRNA—First Vice-President and Government Spokesman Hasan Habibi here Monday rejected any connection between the use of influence by Iran in securing the release of Western hostages and its arms purchase plans.

Speaking in his weekly press conference Habibi castigated vicious attempts by Western media to link the two subjects. "Iran is making efforts and taking steps for the release of the Western hostages merely for humanitarian and moral reasons," he told reporters. He said certain countries resort to hostage taking as a means of blackmailing but "the Islamic Republic of Iran is basically against such a measure and will not approve it under any circumstance."

Habibi stressed that in the same manner Iran managed to obtain the needed armament during the (1980-1988) imposed war, it can purchase its military requirements at present.

Referring to arms contracts between Iran and a number of countries which were suspended after the victory of 1979 Islamic revolution, Habibi said Tehran is of the view that all countries must respect their commitments, either military or economic.

On Iran's stand vis-a-vis the military agreement between the U.S. and Kuwait, Habibi said: "Iran condemns presence of foreign forces in the region and maintains that regional affairs must be settled by regional states." He added that foreign military forces are unable to launch special activities in the region and that the present conditions will not allow their permanent presence.

Pointing to approval of regulations determining value of gifts to be exchanged between the Iranian and foreign officials, Habibi said it was formulated by the commission in charge of cultural affairs and was then presented to the government for approval. According to the regulations, gifts to be exchanged must not exceed the set value, he said adding that the Foreign Ministry has been instructed to inform all states to take into account the limit in presenting gifts to the Iranian officials. Gifts with cultural values, he told reporters, will be considered public wealth and will be kept in a special place.

As for the trend of reconstruction efforts in war-stricken areas, Habibi said a fund of over rls. [rials] 134,000 million has been allocated for this purpose this year, up by 130 percent compared to last year.

President Welcomes Demise of 'Atheist' USSR

LD0609110691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] This week the Tehran Friday prayers were held under the leadership of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani at Tehran University and the adjacent streets, with massive participation of the people.

In the prayer sermons Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani explained the recent events in the Soviet Union. Referring to the letter of His Eminence the Imam [Khomeyni]—may he be admitted to God's paradise—to Gorbachev as well as to the disintegration of Marxism in that country, he said: Only a grand personality like His Eminence the Imam could foresee such an event, which was in itself a courageous feat.

The president described the recent events in the Soviet Union as baffling. He added: Perhaps one should look for the main cause of these events in the contents of the school of Marxism. In fact, one of the greatest mistakes of that school is to deny spirituality and religion to the people. It is quite obvious that one cannot separate humanity from God and the truth of being and that power cannot continue in the absence of God. He then said that concentration of power and denial of freedom to the people were among other mistakes of the school of Marxism. He said: Slogans such as the establishment of justice, equality, the classless society, and welfare for the workers—which initially attracted the people—were never realized; therefore, that school lost popular support.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then referred to the opportunistic and hypocritical confrontation of the West with the events in the Soviet Union and added: By their promises of help, the Westerners have demeaned the people of the Soviet Union. They are after their own ends, and that gives us cause to worry.

On the stance of our country regarding the events in the Soviet Union he said: We condemn any atheist and unjust regime; we welcome disintegration of such regimes.

Stressing the Islamic Republic of Iran's support for Soviet President Gorbachev's policies on the future of that country, the president said: What is of importance is the will of the people. The policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to respect the decision of the people. Our country has no intention to interfere whatsoever. Of importance is the adoption of fair and equal conduct toward declarations of independence by the republics.

In today's Friday prayer sermons in Tehran, held on the threshold of the anniversary of the passing of the honorable Prophet, may God's blessing be on him and his scion, as well as on the martyrdom of Imam Hasan Mujtaba and Imam Reza, peace be upon them, the Tehran acting Friday prayer leader made references to the lofty personality of the honorable Prophet and the way his greatness had affected the human history. He also explained the characteristics of divine prophethood, which leads to building the character of human beings.

Referring to rapid expansion of Islam all over the world in the early Islamic period, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Wherever pure Islam arrived, it was welcomed by the people, and so it stayed there forever. Another example is the case of the Islamic regions that were under the pressure of Marxism for 70 years, and yet their peoples remained loyal to Islam despite pressures and hardships.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also referred to events in contemporary history, especially since the revolution, that have taken place during the month of Shahrivar [Iranian

month beginning 23 September]. He also remembered with respect the memory of the dear ones who have been martyred in that month, especially Martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar [former president and prime minister] and the martyrs of 17 Shahrivar [demonstrators killed on 8 September 1978].

President Discusses U.S. Theme for Hajj Rituals

LD0509103991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, at a meeting with this year's hajj medical team [dispatched to look after Mecca pilgrims] this morning, said that the favorable performance of hajj rituals this year was a great gain and success for the Islamic Republic of Iran which was realised thanks to wisdom of the eminent leader [Khamene'i].

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani referring to Imam Khomeyni's deep desire for the participation of the Iranian Muslims at the hajj rituals, and expressing regret that the grounds were not prepared for the participation of the Iranians at that time. He added: The political issues of the Islamic world, including America's hegemony and the issue of Palestine, must be raised during the hajj rituals as a religious-political duty. The president expressed hope that the hajj rituals will be performed more gloriously in the future years, and that during these ceremonies the Iranian pilgrims will guard the aspirations of the martyrs' blood. The president also paid tribute to this year's hajj medical team for their efforts and said that their services will bring satisfaction to Almighty God.

At the beginning of this meeting, the head of the Iranian medical team during this year's hajj ceremonies presented a report to the President on the activities and services provided by this team.

Belonogov Receives Ambassador, Velayati Note

LD0209172791 Teheran IRNA in English 1635 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Text] Moscow, Sept. 2, IRNA—A message from Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati was handed over to the Soviet Foreign Ministry here Monday.

The message was delivered to Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov by the Iranian ambasador here Nematollah Yazdi.

The two also discussed the current developments in the Soviet Union and the prospects for Tehran-Moscow ties.

Cabinet Approves Joining Dhaka Technical Center

NC0509092791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] The cabinet met yesterday afternoon and approved the bill on the membership of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Government in the technical and vocational center of Dhaka, which is attached to the Islamic Conference Organization. The cabinet discussed several proposals put forth by the executive organs, approving some of them, and reviewed important domestic developments.

'New Cultural Movement' Viewed as Regime Failure

NC0609132091 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Dear listeners, signs of a new cultural movement are surfacing in our country. New newspapers and magazines dealing with cultural, social, economic and artistic topics are appearing alongside the government-controlled press.

This cultural movement has taken root despite the dominance of the mullahs and thus deserves a closer examination. After consolidating its position, the mullahs' regime launched an onslaught against the free press, banning all nongovernment newspapers and magazines. Since that time, the press and the rest of the media have been nothing but mouthpieces for spreading the views of the mullahs' system.

New newspapers and magazines then appeared on the scene. Some are owned by friends or relatives of officials or by former employees of the regime and intended to promote the policies and views of this or that faction within the hierarchy. In fact, they can be seen as platforms for the expression of internal dissent within the ruling party. Some of the new publications, however, are the work of writers, artists, and other cultural figures who have no ties to the ruling party and who do not eulogize it as it expects them to. These publications, among which are ADABESTAN [LAND OF LITERATURE], DONYA-YE SOKHAN [WORLD OF WORDS], GARDUN [FIRMAMENT], and ARMAN [ASPIRATION], have met with a warm welcome from the people.

The new cultural movement also extends to the writing, compiling, translating, and printing and dissemination of books. Despite all the difficulties created by heavy censorship, Iran's literary scene has been given a new impetus. Activities in the fields of music and drama also seem to have been imbued with a new dynamism.

All this indicates that the regime's efforts to establish a monopoly and its censorship and repression have not been a total success and that it has failed to establish a political and social base among the people. The people are tired of the regime's publications and do not read them. [passage omitted]

This new cultural movement has, however, become the target of the faction known as the hardliners, who accuse it of cultural liberalism and demand that the new publications be closed down. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Government To Recognize 3 Baltic Republics

BK0809141091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Pakistan has decided to recognize the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Official Comments on Developments in Soviet Union

BK0709132191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Pakistan is closely watching the fast-moving developments in the Soviet Union, especially because they have far-reaching implications for our region. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad that the people of Pakistan have the (?closest) ties with their brethren in Central Asia. Pakistan is establishing contacts with Central Asian republics. Our ambassador in Moscow has approached the Soviet Government for setting up a consulate-general in Tashkent. PIA [Pakistan International Airlines] is also studying the opening of its service to Tashkent. Official visits to and from these republics are being planned.

Four Killed, 24 Injured in Lahore Grenade Attack

BK0709162291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0721 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Lahore, Pakistan, Sept 7 (AFP)—Four people were killed and 24 injured in a hand grenade attack on a public meeting of an important Muslim Sunni fundamentalist party here late Friday, police and hospital sources said Saturday.

It was the second attack in a day against the Anjuman-Sipahe Sahaba (ASS), which had organised the meeting to commemorate the defence day of Pakistan.

Earlier, the vice president of ASS, Maulana Mohammad Yusuf, was critically injured in a bomb attack on his residence Friday morning in Muzaffargarh, about 300 kilometers (190 miles) south of here.

He was in a coma in hospital, while his wife, two daughters and a son suffered minor injuries, hospital sources said.

The organisers of the meeting in Lahore said the hand grenade was hurled from outside the park minutes before the arrival of the president of ASS, Maulana Zia-ur-Rahman Farooqi. No arrests were made.

The ASS leaders have blamed Shiites for the attacks.

Tension between Sunni and Shiite Muslims has been high since early July when a hand grenade, hurled during a Shiite procession marking the martyrdom of prophet Muhammed's grandson Imam Hussain, injured three people.

The ASS has blamed Shiites for the slaying two years ago of its founder Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, which followed the murder of Iranian cultural attache Sadeq Ganji in Lahore.

Prime Minister Expresses Concern

BK0809162891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has expressed concern and anguish over two recent incidents of sectarian violence resulting in loss of valuable lives. In a statement in Islamabad, he said although isolated in nature, these incidents signal a deep-rooted conspiracy to generate hatred among people and create instability in the country. Counselling patience and tolerance, he expressed the confidence that the people will (?foil) the designs of these antistate and antipeople elements and frustrate their plans through unity and harmony in their ranks. He directed the provincial governments to contain the evil of sectarianism at all costs. The federal government would extend all help to the provinces to eradicate this evil which has no place in an Islamic society. Mr. Nawaz Sharif appealed to ulema and leaders of different religious groups to counsel tolerance and spread love and harmony among fellow Muslims.

Curfew Imposed

BK0809002691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1801 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Islamabad, Sept 7 (AFP)—A central Pakistani city was placed under curfew Saturday as attacks linked to Muslim sectarian strife left nine people dead, police and religious sources said.

Four died and 24 were injured in a grenade attack on a public meeting of anti-Shi'ite Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba (ASS) in Lahore, Punjab's capital, late Friday, sources said.

Five other people were shot dead Saturday by gunmen on motorcycles outside the central Punjab city of Jhang, where a curfew was immediately imposed, sources in Jhang said.

The victims, members of a group belonging to the Sunni fundamentalist Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam organization, were driving to another town when the gunmen opened fire, the sources said.

The gunmen escaped and no arrests were reported.

Markets in Jhang were immediately shut as news of the bloodshed spread, and authorities ordered a curfew in the city where many have lost their lives in recurring sectarian violence.

The ASS, based in Jhang, has been campaigning against Shiites, whom they regard as non-believers of Islam, since the murder of ASS founder Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhang about two years ago.

Pakistani Shiites and Tehran in turn have blamed the ASS for the assassination of Iranian diplomat Sadiq Ganji in Lahore in December 1990.

Fundamentalist Leader Hurt in Bomb Attack 6 Sep

BK0709002791 Hong Kong AFP in English 1714 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Islamabad, Sept 6 (AFP)—An important Muslim fundamentalist party leader was in a coma in hospital Friday after a bomb attack on his residence, police and hospital sources said.

Police said attackers lobbed two hand-bombs at the residence of Maulana Mohammed Yusuf, vice president of the Anjuman-Sipahe Sahaba (ASS), in Muzaffargarh, about 350 miles (560 kilometres) southeast of here.

The first bomb destroyed the outer wall of the residence, enabling the second device to be thrown into the victim's bedroom in the early hours of the morning.

Yusuf was taken to Multan Hospital where he was in coma and in critical condition, doctors said. His wife, two daughters and a son suffered minor injuries and were later discharged.

Tension between Sunni and Shiite Muslims in Muzaffargarh has been high since July when a hand grenade, hurled during a Shiite procession marking the martyrdom of prophet Muhammed's grandson Imam Hussain, injured three people.

The ASS has blamed Shiites for the slaying two years ago of its founder Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, which followed the murder of Iranian cultural attache Sadeq Ganji in Lahore.

Bhutto: 'Great Pressure' To Quit Politics

BK0909012491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 9 Sep 91

[Text] Pakistan's former prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, says that great pressure is being put on her to quit politics. In an interview to a French journalist in Islamabad, she said that her husband is being used as a hostage to her political career. Reiterating her earlier statement, Ms. Bhutto challenged the country's govenment about its proposed trial for treason over her remark that Islamabad has nuclear weapon know-how.

Major Party Withdraws Supports for Sharif

BK0609120891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] In Pakistan, the prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif's Islami Jamhoori Ittehad government has received a setback with the Jamiat-Ulema-i-Islam—JUI—announcing its decision to withdraw support to the government and the Jamaat-i-Islami threatening to follow suit if its demands are not fulfilled. Accusing the Nawaz Sharif government of not abiding by the conditions stipulated for extending cooperation, the JUI chief, Maulana Fazlur Rahman, said in Karachi that the parliament has failed to deliver the goods.

He also criticized President Ghulam Ishaq Khan for remaining silent before the Sharia bill was passed in the National Assembly.

One Killed, 18 Injured in Indian Train Attack

BK0709115091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi is making utmost efforts to provide all possible assistance to the Pakistani nationals injured in the attack by armed persons on the Atari-Delhi special train near Ludhiana yesterday. The Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that the special train, also called Samjhauta Express, was attacked and most of its Pakistani passengers were zaireen [pilgrims] who were going to attend the urs [death anniversary rituals] of Hazrat Mojaddid 'Ali al-Sani at Sirhind. One Pakistani lady Musammat Fatima Bibi of Multan was killed, while two other Pakistani nationals—Musammat Naseem Begum and Mr. Arshad, both of Karachi—sustained serious bullet injuries. Sixteen other Pakistani nationals received minor injuries.

Concern Expressed to India

BK0709161991 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The Indian deputy high commissioner was called to the Foreign Office in Islamabad today and conveyed the concern of the government of Pakistan over the attack on the Atari-Delhi special train yesterday. The attack had resulted in the death of one Pakistani woman and injuries to 18 Pakistanis. The Government of India was requested to conduct an inquiry into the incident and share its findings with Pakistan. The Indian Government was also asked to extend all assistance and facilities to the injured Pakistanis and in this regard cooperate fully with the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi.

Satisfaction Expressed Over NAM Conference

BK0809051091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Pakistan expressed satisfaction over the proceedings of the ministerial conference of the Nonaligned Movement [NAM] countries and said that Pakistan's aim on Afghanistan was fulfilled as the conference emphasized finding a comprehensive political solution to this problem according to the UN resolutions. Pakistani delegation spokesman told ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN in Accra that on Kashmir, Pakistan wanted effectively to raise this issue at an international level and to apprise the movement countries of severe nature of the issue, violation of fundamental rights in occupied Kashmir, and the need for a settlement of the issue.

The spokesman said the conference stressed the need for establishing nuclear weapons-free regions in the different parts of the world. The conference also stressed need that nuclear weapons-possessing countries should give guarantees of security to the nonnuclear countries. He stated Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's proposals in this regard. He said the conference indirectly supported these efforts at the regional level.

Pakistan is ready to resolve the disputes peacefully by another means in accordance with UN charter in case of a negative outcome of bilateral talks with India on settlement of Kashmir issue. This was stated by Pakistani delegation leader Shaharyar Khan to the ministerial conference of the Nonaligned Movement in a news conference in Accra yesterday. He said these means include mediation, mutual understanding, talks and steps for a just settlement. However, efforts should be made to solve this issue through bilateral talks. He said Kashmir is an international issue for Pakistan which exists on the UN agenda.

In replying to a question, he said that if India agrees to hold a plebiscite on Kashmir, Pakistan will withdraw its troops from Azad Kashmir. The Afghanistan problem should be solved politically, and its independence, neutral status, and Islamic identity should be reinstated, Shaharyar Khan added.

PRC Economic Delegation Arrives on Week's Visit

BK0609143491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] A nine-member Chinese economic delegation led by Gu Yongjiang, vice minister for foreign economic relations and trade, arrived in Islamabad this evening on a week-long visit to Pakistan. The delegation will represent China at the seventh meeting of the Pakistan-PRC joint economic commission beginning in the federal capital tomorrow. Talking to newsmen on his arrival at Islamabad, the Chinese vice minister said the two countries will boost their cooperation by investing in joint ventures in China and Pakistan.

Economic Commission Meeting Begins

BK0709120491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The seventh session of the Pakistan-China joint economic commission began in Islamabad this morning. The Chinese delegation led by the vice minister for foreign economic relations and trade, Mr. Gu Yongjiang, is representing their country at the deliberations. The leader of the Chinese delegation later called on the president, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and briefed him about the deliberations held at the joint economic commission's session. He said that there was a great scope for promoting bilateral cooperation and the current meeting of the commission would help identify specific areas for this purpose. The president told the Chinese guests that the joint economic commission provides the two countries an important framework for promoting bilateral cooperation. The current meeting has assumed special significance in the context of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations.

More on Commission Meeting

BK0709154491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The three-day session of the Pakistan-China joint economic commission began in Islamabad today. The day also marks the 40th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. Inaugurating the session, Sartaj Aziz, the federal minister for finance and economic affairs, expressed the hope that the seventh session of the commission will prove yet another landmark in the efforts to further strengthen current bilateral cooperation in economic, trade, technical, and several other fields. The finance minister highly appreciated the existing large-scale cooperation between the two countries and apprised the Chinese delegation led by Gu Yonjiang, the Chinese vice minister for foreign economic relations and trade, of the existing trade deficit with China.

In his inaugural address, the Chinese delegation leader spoke of the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China and expressed the hope that the current meeting of the commission will identify more areas for further expanding existing bilateral cooperation. He said Beijing is ready to increase imports from Pakistan to remove its trade deficit with China. The meeting set up two working groups which will consider all these issues. One of the groups will look into trade matters, while the other will consider issues relating to economic assistance and cooperation.

Sri Lanka

Two Rebel Legislators 'Sacked' From Party

BK0609122091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1213 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Colombo, Sept 6 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's crisis-hit ruling party Friday sacked from its highest executive body two dissident legislators leading a campaign to overthrow President Ranasinghe Premadasa, rebel spokesmen said.

Lalith Athulathmudali and G.M. Premachandra, who resigned last week, told reporters here that they were expelled from the policy-making working committee of the United National Party (UNP) with immediate effect.

The two men are leading constitutional moves to oust Premadasa and restore parliamentary democracy with the help of dissidents within the deeply split unp and opposition lawmakers.

A court action here Friday by dissidents to prevent the UNP taking disciplinary action against them for backing a resolution to impeach Premadasa, failed when the district judge said the matter was beyond his jurisdiction.

Athulathmudali said they would go to the Supreme Court Monday to seek an order against the UNP leadership from throwing them out of the party.

Besides the two rebel ministers, two junior ministers and four more UNP MPs have openly backed an anti-Premadasa campaign. The dissidents say 47 out of the 125 UNP MPs are backing them, a claim disputed by the government.

Athulathmudali reiterated his claims of support and challenged the government to take a secret ballot on the impeachment resolution in parliament to test the real support.

"We must move away from our presidency which has the most powers in the world," Athulathmudali said. "The whole world is moving away from 'one-man shows' to orchestras."

Premadasa responded to the unprecedented impeachment resolution by suspending parliament for a month until September 24, effectively giving himself more time to win over rebel MPs.

Referendum Said Not Needed To Remove President

BK0609123091 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Cabinet spokesman and Minister of Industries, Science and Technology Ranil Wickremasinghe, referring to the impeachment against the president has said that the president had not committed any act violating Article 38 Paragraph 2 of the Constitution. The allegations are totally baseless. He pointed out that there is no foundation to abolish the executive president elected by the people. Answering questions raised by newsmen yesterday, Minister Wickremasinghe further said that a UNP [United Nationalist Party] parliamentary group has decided that the impeachment motion cannot be entertained by the speaker because of the manner in which the signatures were obtained from parliamentarians. It is now in the hands of the speaker for a ruling. He said it is up to the speaker to decide whether the motion is to be presented in Parliament or not. As far as the government is concerned, it has the required majority in Parliament to defeat any motion against the ruling of the party. Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe categorically stated that there is no need to hold a referendum to remove the president who obtained such a vast majority from the people.

Responding to a question, the minister said that the president would like to see everyone to be back with the United National Party Parliamentary group. The doors are open for them to come back. He made a point that the government parliamentary group can pass any resolution. There is no legal prohibition or provision or standing orders with regard to passing a resolution by the ruling party and presenting to anyone. He noted that the impeachment motion was only officially informed by the speaker and nobody has seen it. Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe said it is customary for the president to address Parliament soon after it meets following a (?prorogation).

Eight Rebel MPs Dismissed From Ruling Party

BK0709044691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0426 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] Colombo, Sept 7 (AFP)—Eight government MPs campaigning for the ouster of President Ranasinghe Premadasa were sacked from the crisis-ridden ruling United National Party (UNP), party officials said here Saturday.

The expulsions came as two of the dissident lawmakers were removed Friday from the UNP's top executive body, the working committee, as they failed to win a court order preventing disciplinary action against them.

A UNP statement said the eight defectors sacked from the party would lose their parliamentary seats, but political sources said they had one month to appeal to the Supreme Court against the party decision.

Lalith Athulathmudali and G.M. Premachandra are leading constitutional moves to oust Premadasa and restore parliamentary democracy with the help of dissidents within the deeply split UNP and opposition legislators.

A court action here Friday by dissidents to prevent the UNP taking disciplinary action against them for backing a resolution to impeach Premadasa failed when the district judge said the matter was beyond his jurisdiction.

Athulathmudali said they would go to the Supreme Court on Monday to seek an order against the UNP leadership.

The eight sacked MPs have openly backed an anti-Premadasa campaign. The dissidents say that 47 of the 125 UNP MPs are backing them, a claim disputed by the government.

Athulathmudali reiterated his claims of support and challenged the government to take a secret ballot on the impeachment resolution in parliament to test the real support.

"We must move away from our presidency which has the most powers in the world," Athulathmudali said. "The whole world is moving away from 'one-man shows' to orchestras."

Premadasa suspended parliament for a month until September 24, effectively giving himself more time to win over rebel MPs before the unprecedented impeachment resolution could go before the house.

Expelled Members Named

BK0709120891 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 7 Sep 91

[Text] The working committee of the United National Party [UNP], presided over by its leader President Ranasinghe Premadasa, unanimously approved the recommendation of the disciplinary committee of the party to expel eight members from the United National Party with effect from yesterday. They are: K. Vincent Perera, Premaratne Gunasekera, Lalith Athulathmudali, Lakshman Seneviratne, Samaraweera Weerawanni, Chandra Gankanda, Gamini Dissanayake, and G.M. Premachandra. Consequently, their seats in Parliament fall vacant under the provisions of the constitution. Out of 56 members of the working committe, 55 were present. The only absentee was the chief minister of the Western Provincial Council, Susil Moonesinghe. He had intimated his inability to be present, as he was out of the country. The leader of the party, President Ranasinghe Premadasa, abstained from voting.

District Judge, Colombo P. Wijeratne yesterday refused to grant an enjoining order of interim injunction, restraining the working committee and national executive committee of the United National Party from suspending or expelling the eight members of the UNP. The judge also stated that he had no jurisdiction to declare that the national executive committee was not entitled to interfere with the (?plaintiff's) rights and previleges as members of parliament as that was the matter of interpretation of the Constitution, which lay with the Supreme Court.

Army Chief Warns Military To Remain Neutral

BK0809055291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0548 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] Colombo, Sept 8 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's army chief warned his men to remain neutral amid reports of several officers meeting with dissidents campaigning for President Ranasinghe Premadasa's overthrow, press reports said Sunday.

Lieutenant General Hamilton Wanasinghe told his senior commanders last week to be impartial in the current political battle triggered by an unprecedented impeachment resolution against Premadasa.

THE SUNDAY TIMES newspaper said the army was contemplating disciplinary action against at least one senior officer who is alleged to have visited a dissident from the ruling United National Party (UNP) after the crisis. "Wanasinghe told his men to refrain from taking sides and warned them not to spread rumours by talking amongst themselves," THE SUNDAY TIMES said.

Immediately after the speaker Mohammad Hanifa Mohammad accepted a motion to impeach Premadasa, the Army, Navy and Air Force commanders and police chief issued a statement August 29 declaring allegiance to the constitution. The dissident group is led by former national security minister Lalith Athulathmudali and at least two other former cabinet ministers. They have ruled out the possibility of military intervention in the crisis.

Premadasa late Saturday told a group of loyalists that his life may be in danger and reiterated that the Israeli secret service, the Mossad, was behind moves to overthrow him. "The stage is coming when I may have to sacrifice my life. If that happens, the good work we have been doing should be continued," Premadasa told 3,000 UNP members during a marathon 210-minute speech late Saturday.

Political observers believe the crisis could drag on because of the complicated legal processes involved. Eight dissidents sacked from the UNP are already petitioning the Supreme ccourt against their dismissal.

Premadasa: 'Be Prepared for Elections'

BK0809090691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 8 Sep 91

[Text] The Sri Lankan president, Mr. Premadasa, has asked the members and supporters of the ruling United National Party [UNP] to be prepared for elections. Addressing a meeting of the national executive of the UNP in Colombo, Mr. Premadasa said although he has no intention of dissolving the parliament, as a president he can call for elections any time depending upon the political situation. Mr. Premadasa's remarks assume significance in the wake of the move to impeach him by opposition parties and some dissident members of the UNP. The ruling party yesterday expelled eight dissident parliament members, including four former ministers who had supported the impeachment move.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan army chief, General Wanasinghe, has warned army officers to remain neutral amid reports that several officers are holding meetings with the dissidents.